Daily Report

Latin America

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Presidents Speak at Signing of Asuncion Treaty

Paraguay's Rodriguez on Future

PY2903173491 Asuncion Red Nacional de Television in Spanish 1641 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Address by Paraguay President General Andres Rodriguez at the signing of the Treaty of Asuncion creating the Common Market of the South in the Hall of the Americas of the Central Bank in Asuncion—live]

[Text] Your Excellencies Argentine President Carlos Saul Menem, Brazilian President Fernando Collor, and Uruguayan President Luis Alberto Lacalle Herrera; Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen:

The Paraguayan Government and people have the high honor to give their warmest welcome to the illustrious presidents of Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay, and their delegations who are attending the signing of this historic and important agreement, Treaty of Asuncion, to the joy and pride of our country.

With the signing of this important treaty we are formally creating the Common Market of the South [Mercosur], thus responding to the unavoidable challenge that represents our country's integration in a period during which unity and joint efforts are conditions essential to meet our common objectives of socioeconomic development in an atmosphere of freedom and democracy.

As a result of the democratic system now prevailing in Latin American countries and the need to confront the new situation, Mercosur is being born to broaden our possibilities and to encourage the complementation of our productive activities by eliminating the obstacles that hinder economic growth, employment, and free competitiveness.

Latin America expects that a new economic system will be implemented in the world with characteristics that can be very different from those prevailing in the nations just a few years ago. Europe has renewed itself through integration. The walls have collapsed, the ideological, geographical and economic barriers have disappeared, and Eastern European countries broke their chains to join the market economy.

Latin America must not exclude itself this revealing experience; therefore, it has to face the challenge of creating a great economic bloc. The creation of the first common market in this part of the continent is a response to that challenge.

We are aware that today is not the end of a negotiation process. On the contrary, we are beginning a great task that will demand fruitful activity, inventiveness, and boldness from us so that the measures to be adopted to coordinate the macroeconomic policies and the integration of the different sectors of the economy can become a reality favoring the development and the welfare of our nations.

The implementation of this ambitious program that seeks to promote a common economic system in our countries will demand our governments' political will so that with a spirit of cooperation we can positively take advantage of the possibilities emerging from the subregional accord.

It must be pointed out that Mercosur's success will not depend only on the effectiveness of the measures to be adopted by the governments, but to a great extent on the creativity, talent, effort, and constant devotion of businessmen and even of our people as a whole.

We will not be able to achieve integration just through the decisions made by the governments or through lengthy negotiations, but through a shared wish and the reciprocal actions of our societies, in response to our common heritage and our unyielding rights to live in freedom, equality, and democracy as the most appropriate channel to reach the social justice for which we long.

Today we reaffirm, with our firm support for the great principles of the Latin American integration whose main objective is to make the complex field of economic activity compatible and to project freedom and democracy onto it, the economic policy we have promised to implement since the beginning of our terms in office.

Latin America must definitively stop being just a great producer of raw materials. It must promote overall development. It has to broaden and modernize its industrial capacity and participate in the technological development. In this regard, the new world order must be characterized not just by a rhetorical solidarity but by real and effective international cooperation.

The most technologically and economically advanced countries must help us promote our development. It has been demonstrated that the danger for regression remains alive and threatening in places which offer no conditions for an honorable life and where uncertain freedoms still prevails.

I believe that we presidents attending this ceremony want to participate in the great adventure of transforming and promoting the development of our nations, giving a more humane profile to our nations. It is precisely in pursuing this undertaking that we place our hope in the Mercosur. Its creation is ultimately aimed at offering a better standard of living for our people. It is possible that we are now experiencing the justified optimism of those presidents who signed the Treaty of Rome which gave birth to the EEC. I am convinced that, like the Treaty of Rome, the Treaty of Asuncion will succeed, paving the way for definitive Latin American integration.

I thank you for sharing on Paraguayan soil this process of dynamic unity and this constructive and fruitful complementation. We are responding to the fraternal links existing among Argentines, Brazilians, Uruguayans and Paraguayans which demand, from the depth of our history, this contribution to equality and interaction to jointly promote the prosperity and justice that our nations deserve.

Argentina's Menem Lauds Unity

PY2903235091 Asuncion Red Nacional de Television in Spanish 1650 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Speech by Argentine President Carlos Saul Menem at the signing of the Treaty of Asuncion creating the Common Market of the South in the Hall of the Americas at the Central Bank in Asuncion—live]

[Text] Mr. President of the Republic of Paraguay, General Andres Rodriguez; Mr. President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, Dr. Fernando Collor; Mr. President of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay, Dr. Luis Alberto Lacalle Herrera; authorities of the Governments of Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Argentina; representatives of the Armed Forces of these countries; members of the diplomatic corps; ladies and gentlemen:

Sisters and brothers of Paraguay, Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina. [applause] I ask you to receive the embrace of my people, who consider—as I do—you to be blood brothers.

You are brothers because even nature has made our Mesopotamia one sole territory, where political borders are necessary but not useful; brothers, because our rivers do not divide, but unite us; brothers, because Paraguay has joined the process of democratization that all Latin Americans are promoting and celebrating; brothers, for a number of reasons that would take too long to enumerate.

It is within the framework of this brotherhood that I wish to refer to the singular historic challenge that the international system has presented us with. Latin America as a whole has a key role to play in view of the profound transformations that are being incorporated into the world order. Our role consists of discarding the traditional conflict possibilities that have now passed to the background. Our concern is no longer armed war. Our most important concern must now be peace, but not an inert, hybrid peace. It must be a peace of growth, of real freedom.

As an international region, our goal must be a peace that will allow us full access to scientific and technological progress, a creative peace.

To achieve this peace, it is necessary for us Latin Americans to first acknowledge that we are a great nation capable of attaining our growth by regions. This will not be possible if we do not precisely follow the course that has been pointed out to us by history and the wisdom of our environment, which extends its rivers and mountains from north to south in one body. I once said that I saw South America as a great giant that only had to get up and move forward.

This is what I want to reaffirm today, to share this integration process with all the peoples who live with desire, faith, and enthusiasm. But one of the most necessary tools this giant needs to activate itself concerns a key aspect that we cannot ignore: economic-productive integration.

We are living through an era in which walls that separated peoples are being demolished. We rejoice with this new trend, which promises a world more concerned with building than with destroying. We are pleased to see a world more interested in cooperation than confrontation; a world that we hope will have more respect for humankind.

The continuous growth of world trade has created a phenomenon that is usually referred to as the globalization of the international economy. This phenomenon is very important because it creates new opportunities and risks.

There are opportunities, because our ability to bring an end to regional underdevelopment depends on our skill at inserting our countries into this new world system. There are risks, because history will leave us behind if we do not adapt quickly and efficiently.

Today in Latin America there is a deep and wide-ranging consensus on a basic truth: We cannot develop our region if we turn our backs on the world around us. I am not afraid to say that an appropriate international economic insertion into the world economy is essential for our own economic development.

The consolidation of large economic spheres is a concrete and absolute reality. Europe 1992 is no longer an utopian ideal in the minds of prophets and alchemists. It is a tangible fact that is leading to the integration of economies, societies, and cultures that have been historically divided by artificial barriers.

Interregional relations will increase and take precedence over the country-to-country links that dominated after World War II. This is the great challenge that moved us to visualize an appropriate answer: regional integration. Our vote for integration is not ideological. I would like to stress it. Our vote for integration is not ideological; on the contrary, it is a method of establishing efficiency.

This is the only and the best strategy, which will allow our societies to intensify their reconversion and take a great leap in economic quality. This is the appropriate framework, which will allow our mutual advantages to interrelate in such a manner as to ensure our peoples access to more and better goods. Thus, we are encouraging a healthy price and services competition. This is a path of no return; besides, it is the best path.

Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay began walking this path together in 1990. Last year we signed a document incorporating the Oriental Republic of Uruguay and committing our countries to further increasing mutual cooperation and integration. The advantages are clear. They are evidenced, for instance, by the large increase in trade between Brazil and Argentina and the now common presence of products from the two countries in both markets.

The creation of the Common Market of the South to incorporate the economies of Paraguay and Uruguay became an undeniable necessity. The incorporation had to

be real, concrete, and effective. That is why we are here today, in this city which is the mother of cities, to sign a treaty creating a common market for our four countries.

This act shows our peoples' clear determination to advance toward a joint future, to begin a new stage in the relations among our four countries, to further consolidate the regional links of peace and friendship among our democracies.

During our revolutions for independence, our national heroes dreamed of progressing toward the creation of a common fatherland. This treaty is another step toward the realization of that dream.

Dear brothers, in this land, which was the axis of the Atlantic culture, and on this soil, which in the past was a model of the association of Indian and Christian faiths through the Guarani missions, I want to say that today, with this agreement, we are also signing our countries' rediscovery of our American roots. May God bless you. Thank you. [applause]

Brazil's Collor Welcomes Union

PY3003004091 Asuncion Red Nacional de Television in Spanish 1701 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Speech by Brazilian President Fernando Collor de Mello at the signing of the Treaty of Asuncion creating the Common Market of the South in the Hall of the Americas at the Central Bank in Asuncion—live]

[Text] Your Excellencies Paraguayan President Andres Rodriguez, Argentine President Carlos Saul Menem, Uruguayan President Luis Alberto Lacalle, [words indistinct] authorities, ladies and gentlemen:

Our meeting here today is undoubtedly a meaningful event in the history of our four countries and the entire Latin American continent. We are attending a ceremony to sign the treaty creating the Common Market of the South [Mercosur], which marks the beginning of the realization of some of the greatest and oldest aspirations of our people.

By signing this Treaty of Asuncion, we are reasserting the firm political will of the Governments of Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Brazil to make a joint effort in the solitary task of building more prosperous, fair societies that are deeply committed to basic freedoms and the democratic system, and always aware of the need for development in harmony with the environment.

Through these means we are establishing an integrated market of 200 million people: Argentines, Paraguayans, Uruguayans, and Brazilians sharing a common area where national barriers, protectionism, and discrimination of every kind will no longer exist. More than a combined development strategy, the signing of the Treaty of Asuncion represents the reaffirmation of our peoples' desire for cooperation, understanding, and peace as unwavering principles of coexistence.

For many years now this stance has guided relations between our four countries, relations marked by dynamic economic, political, and cultural links. These are sound bases that unite us in our search for common, effective solutions to the challenges that will arise as a result of the new international economic order. Our governments are bravely facing these challenges. We have carried out courageous internal reforms to redefine the role played by the state, to perfect democratic institutions, to rescue the productive apparatus, to stimulate market forces, to open our economies, and to modernize our economies by putting special emphasis on a gradual improvement of the living standards of our people. This is the path of integration that will consolidate what we have already achieved and open other opportunities for other equally creative and sound projects for our societies.

We are aware that the example of cooperation that we are proudly showing the world today is only the starting point for an even greater project, Mercosur, an unpostponeable tool aimed at enabling us—jointly, by combining efforts and imagination—to heal the scars left by the lost decade, especially the economic stagnation, technological backwardness, and the low levels registered by most of the social indicators of our countries.

What we are launching today is not just a piece of rhetoric nor an ornament in the history of the Southern Cone. For many years now we have been working hard to bring our economic cooperation to the excellent level of our political understanding. We knew that in an international situation, with so much adversity due to the untimely resurgence of commercial barriers, protectionist measures, and discriminatory measures between the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, the most appropriate path was the realization of the project that is now taking place here in Asuncion, the capital of Paraguay, much to the surprise of pessimists but for the well-being of our countries. [applause]

We knew that in a world expanded by the multinational management of economic and financial relations, in a world driven by the impulse to cluster the influential postindustrial centers in large blocs, there was no alternative but modernization.

We have begun to modernize ourselves by establishing a common market which will strengthen our productive capacity by supplementing our economies but which will not close our doors to the external market. On the contrary, our subregional mechanism of integration will be strengthened by our certainty that—as a unit of enriched countries—we will open our doors to partnerships with third parties, the flow of capital, the essential technological renewal, and the vitality of the most promising forces in the international arena.

In search of modernity, we will join in the task of building a healthy planet, a world in which man never loses sight of the necessity of preserving the environment.

Here in Asuncion, in fraternal ties joining four chiefs of state, we wrote a major page in Latin American history.

Faced with the current challenges, which seem frightening at times, we chose to reject confrontation and assume our duties as statesmen, designing and implementing creative, efficient, and jointly-agreed-upon answers that will give us and our children realistic prospects in the international order that is now being built.

Here in Asuncion, with the testimony of our fellow countrymen, we have restored our faith in our own destiny.

Messrs. Presidents, ladies and gentlemen, the project that we are implementing today as the Mercosur will help us achieve objectives that no country could achieve on its own. That is why Brazil has always extended and will continue to extend total support to integration initiatives in the continent, especially those regulated by the terms of the 1980 Treaty of Montevideo.

We will move forward by stages in sound undertakings, consistent with the real potential of each country, to avoid frustrating some of our greatest hopes in terms of regional integration.

With great satisfaction, I hereby announce a measure that represents the spirit of friendship that presides at this meeting and that reasserts our commitment to permanently improve the forms of understanding among our countries. I have ordered that imports from our Mercosur partners will be exempt from the additional tax for the renewal of our Merchant Marine.

Brazil hopes to translate our far-reaching historical ties into economic and trade achievements. We welcome the progress we have already made through other subregional integration and association organizations on the Latin American continent, especially through the Latin American Integration Association.

Mercosur will not become a closed economic area but one that will be accessible and open to promote cooperation and trade with all Latin American countries and groups of countries.

President Andres Rodriguez, at this time I would like to convey my special congratulations to you and to the Paraguayan nation for our traditional friendly bilateral ties and cooperation efforts and for your spirit of integration. You were able to convey this spirit—which was of course in tune with the most cherished wishes of this friendly people—in our meetings, broadly justifying the pride we feel today for the city of Asuncion and the signing ceremony for the treaty creating Mercosur.

I want to convey my gratitude to you for the equally exemplary hospitality you and the generous Paraguayan people have accorded us at this ceremony, which is historically significant for all of us. As never before, Paraguayans, Argentines, Uruguayans, and Brazilians are today walking together on the path to modernization, which is an essential stage in the consolidation of our democratic achievements and the fulfillment of the most just aspirations of prosperity for our countries and the well-being of our peoples.

Messrs. Presidents, may God help us in this great undertaking. Thank you very much. [applause]

Uruguay's Lacalle on Integration

PY3003163091 Asuncion Red Nacional de Television in Spanish 1712 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Address by Uruguayan President Luis Alberto Lacalle Herrera at the signing of the Treaty of Asuncion creating the Common Market of the South in the Hall of the Americas of the Central Bank in Asuncion—live]

[Text] Mr. President of the Republic of Paraguay, General Andres Rodriguez; Mr. President of the Argentine Republic, Carlos Saul Menem; Mr. President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, Fernando Collor de Mello; Foreign Ministers, Secretaries of State, Ambassadors, Diplomats; my Paraguayan friends: [applause]

It is extremely rewarding for all of us, and partricularly for me, to return to this hall practically 10 months since the centennial of the Panamerican Union was commemorated here. Being here is rewarding for me not just because I am back in Asuncion, but because on that occasion what was heard and said has a lot to do with what we are doing here today. In fact, on that occasion, 100 years since the Panamerican Union was founded, all the speeches, absolutely all, raised concern over economic problems rather than over political problems.

Concern was expressed by the chiefs of state and the ministers who gathered in this hall at that time. They noted that economic prosperity is the necessary counterpart to institutional consolidation. Without suggesting that we relinquish our ideas and phylosophical position, the orators and statesmen who spoke here were no doubt right when they said that if the democratic system could not be converted into the most effective system to ensure prosperity for our people, it would remain a facade. [applause]

That is why we are here today, to lend concrete life to the ideas that were outlined on that occasion and that I have just recollected here at this time. We cannot forget, Messrs. Presidents, that when we gathered last June a grave concern was looming on the international horizon. The collapse of Eastern Europe's political structure had created some sort of spellbound attraction to that area of the world. We were even afraid that all resources, attention, concern, and policies would be drawn toward a new magnetic pole of nations emerging from a long period of domination under a supranational political structure.

We then asked ourselves if the world's attention could ever be focused on our part of the world, if we would ever be in the headlines as news of the day? Yes, dear friends, we can be. We already are and will be again.

In this regard, two events must be noted. One is the Americas Initiative of President Bush who, precisely in

June 1990, set a new style of relationship between the United States and Latin America as one of that great nation's priorities. Another is what we are doing here today, which is something important, very important, universally important. It is said that only tranquility, somnolence, and resignation can be found here, disregarding the fact that we have the will to prosper and forge ahead! [applause]

I speak on behalf of the smallest country in the future common market, of the country with the fewest people, and yet I speak on behalf of a true nation that happily accepts the challenge of associating with its three bother countries of the River Plate Basin. I believe, dear compatriots, that of all places Paraguay is the most appropriate site to clarify the implication of integration for our patriotic nationalism.

Someone might say that we are casting doubt on the authenticity of our nationalism because we intend to expand economic borders to encompass the large expanses of South America. However, I assert that integration and nationalism are not opposite concepts. They are not. On the contrary, nationalism is now equated with prosperity, satisfied people, more work, more goods and resources for our communities. So, how could it be said that with prosperity, our communities will lose their national character? Today we will transform our association into leverage for our nationhood. Therefore, the nationalist spirit for which we have fought so hard remains intact. In peace, deep peace, our forefathers, who gave shape to our nationhood, can continue to rest because no threat hangs over them. On the contrary, standing shoulder to shoulder, each of our nations can feel more Argentine, more Brazilian, more Paraguayan, and more Uruguayan. [applause]

After listening to the important political remarks from the three presidents who have already taken the rostrum, allow me to ask you to take my remarks not as a speech, but as an invitation to meditate. To that effect, let us imagine that it is tomorrow, Wednesday, 27 March, when we have returned to our countries. The treaty has been signed and has become a political episode that cannot be erased, but is integrated into the historical annals of our fatherlands. There will begin the great task that is less colorful, more difficult, more drab, but that is indispensable if this treaty is to have a real life beyond its documentary existence.

First of all, I want to give some thought to our profession as political leaders. We must rethink our work methods, rethink our differences and divisions that necessarily, against the backdrop of the common market, will not look as large. We will feel driven toward common objectives by unknown forces, and we will have to change, adapting to broader, greater, and more generous ways of thinking about our actions.

Here I also think of the entrepreneurs in our countries, who will be indispensable protagonists in the days to come. Their markets will now expand to include millions and millions of potential consumers. We trust that, with their undertakings, these entrepreneurs will show us that we have done well to open the doors to the new times of prospective growth.

I think of workers for whom the treaty-signing ceremony cannot be all there is to integration. Actual integration cannot be brought about by diplomats or politicians whose grandstanding is more fitting to the world of television news. Workers will understand that integration has come to them whenever they can see a bit more of prosperity on their tables and a glimmer more of hope for their children. [applause] More prosperity and more hope will be the hallmarks of success of our integration. [applause]

I think of our children, who, as they reach the time to make their lifelong decisions, will have opportunities we did not have. Consequently, I think of the educational system which should immediately—tomorrow if possible—begin to incorporate into study programs subject matter that will help our association, thereby preparing new generations for this new and great task. [applause]

Friends, the first stage of that task will take up the next five years, 60 months. By then the circumstances of governments will have changed. This president of Uruguay will no longer be in office when the common market is fully established. And, it is perhaps good that things happen in this way, because this undertaking cannot be accomplished in the short time of a term in office, nor can it be the undertaking of democratic presidents who are transitory and fleeting by definition. This task must be carried out while listening the country's heartbeat, the heartbeat of each one of these countries. It should be done with the feeling that we are just one link in the chain, the feeling that we only have this moment to communicate our message, and that others will come later to take up the call and expand it.

That is how I feel, and I believe it is how we all feel. We are plowing the field for opportunity, not for certainty. If the world can teach us something today, it teaches us that regimes that intended to provide certainty ended up in failure. Again the ethics of risk—the profit or loss challenge—is coming to the fore as is becoming the driving force of societies everywhere in the world. [applause]

So, dear friends, it up to us to open the doors to opportunity with the hope that our entrepreneurs and workers will agree to walk through those doors of opportunity. This is what we are doing today—opening the doors.

If we want to keep something as a memento of our ephemeral presence at the helm of our nations' governments, some day let someone remember what we are doing today and say: They brought an earlier dawn.

Aylwin Message Welcomes Treaty, Vows Cooperation

PY2903192491 Asuncion HOY in Spanish 27 Mar 91 p 11

[Text] Chilean President Patricio Aylwin yesterday sent an eloquent message to his Argentine, Paraguayan, Brazilian, and Uruguayan counterparts who met in the Central Bank Convention Hall to sign the Treaty of Asuncion whereby the Common Market of the South, Mercosur, was created. In his message, Aylwin wished Mercosur success.

The message addressed to President Rodriguez stated: "On the occasion of the important meeting held today to sign the Treaty of Asuncion whereby Mercosur is created, I wish to express Chilean solidarity and my government's congratulations on this initiative in support of the Latin American integration.

"We hope that the implementation of this ambitious program will contribute to strengthing the economic and commercial ties among the treaty's signatory countries as well as among all countries of the Latin American Integration Association (Aladi)."

In another paragraph Aylwin says that his "government is convinced that the process of regional economic integration is urgently necessary as a key factor for our nations' progress. This regional integration is also considered a broad opening toward Latin American and other countries, an opening which will contribute to the harmonization of these countries' economic policy and to regional development as well as also to helping make more dynamic these country's presence in the international arena. I also want to express our firm determination to strengthen the link between Chile and this new integration process."

Aylwin concludes by saying: "I ask your excellency to convey to the distinguished presidents of Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay our wishes for the success of the historic treaty that will be signed today. Highest regards, Partricio Aylwin Azocar, president of the Republic of Chile."

The message, which President Rodriguez received at noon yesterday at the Central Bank Convention Center, was welcomed by Presidents Rodriguez, Collor, Lacalle, and Menem, who lauded President Aylwin's attitude.

The four presidents inmediately decided to send a letter thanking Aylwin for his good wishes.

Brazil's Rezek on Common Market, Itaipu Treaty

PY2903185691 Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 27 Mar 91 p 7

[Excerpts] In remarks to Paraguayan reporters, Brazilian Foreign Minister Francisco Rezek has conceded that "in the future" the energy generated by the Itaipu dam could become a negotiable commodity within the context of the Common Market of the South (Mercosur).

Rezek noted, however, that the energy generated by the large hydroelectric plant is, "for the time being, earmarked for its two owners; that is, Paraguay and Brazil." [passage omitted]

Rezek added: "All Latin American countries are interested in this item. For the time being, Paraguay and Brazil can adequately use the energy generated by Itaipu, but in the future that energy could draw greater interest within the context of the common market." [passage omitted]

Asked about possible problems stemming from inflation and other economic woes that are currently hitting Brazil and Argentina hard, Rezek said: "We must start the common market process because it will also help our countries get rid of inflation sooner."

Commenting on the differences existing among the economies of the Mercosur member countries and on the danger Mercosur poses to the weaker countries, Rezek said that this situation can be solved "with some sound rules designed to compensate for the possible imbalances. This is something that can be resolved with a little effort."

Rodriguez: Treaty Negotiable

PY3003125491 Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 27 Mar 91 p 6

[Excerpt] President Andres Rodriguez has for the first time admitted the possibility of renegotiating the Itaipu Treaty in light of a possible integration of the region's energy sector. This position was endorsed by Foreign Minister Alexis Frutos who said that integration "involves all areas." Brazilian Foreign Minister Francisco Rezek said that such a possibility could be realized, but only in the future. Uruguayan Industry and Energy Minister Augusto Montesdeoca said that electrical power networking could be very beneficial for Mercosur [Common Market of the South].

The Treaty of Itaipu, which was signed 18 years ago, bans the sale of the power generated by the hydroelectric plant to any third countries. This clause harms Paraguayan interests because Paraguay cannot freely use its surplus power. In addition, it excludes the Itaipu plant from any future regional power market.

ANDE [National Electric Power Administration] President Engineer Zoilo Rodas recently told ABC COLOR that the electrical network between Paraguay, Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil is technically feasible. It should be noted, however, that an essential precondition is the modification of the clause that forbids Itaipu from selling power to countries other than Brazil and Paraguay.

Asked whether the treaty could be renegotiated, President Rodriguez answered: "Yes, of course," adding that "effective organizations should obviously be created to study any difficulties, if there are any, and to identify the possibilities in this area."

This is the first time that the Paraguayan president has given an affirmative answer to this question, which he has been asked on several occasions.

During a previous visit by President Fernando Collor de Mello, during the 20th OAS General Assembly, Rodriguez said that the treaty was fine the way it was and that there was nothing to renegotiate. [passage omitted]

Mercosur Foreign Ministers Issue Declarations

PY2903171291 Asuncion NOTICIAS in Spanish 27 Mar 91 Special Mercosur Supplement p 7

[Text] In their first declaration, the foreign ministers of the four countries that signed the Asuncion Treaty [establishing the Common Market of the South—Mercosur] stress the treaty's importance in achieving the objectives of the 1980 Montevideo Treaty.

In that context, the foreign ministers express their conviction that the new prospects created by the consolidation of subregional groups will facilitate the development of economic links and the integration of the region as a whole.

In item three of their first declaration the foreign ministers reiterate their willingness to preserve and broaden the agreements signed under Aladi (Latin American Integration Association).

The ministers state that they will study with all interest, and in accordance with treaty regulations, future requests to join the market.

In the document the foreign ministers also reiterate their governments' political decision to ensure that the instrument that is signed 26 March will contribute to an increased flow of trade and the competitive insertion of our economies into the international economy.

The document is dated 26 March, the day the treaty creating Mercosur was signed in our capital city.

In view of the Bolivian interest in joining the common market, the foreign ministers of the four countries, express their willingness to jointly explore with the Bolivian Government the various levels and alternatives available to make a timely incorporation possible.

The foreign ministers' second declaration on 26 March says that the discussions with the Bolivian Government on the subject will be conducted within the framework of Asuncion Treaty stipulations.

The foreign ministers will study ways to make Bolivian incorporation possible in view of the five countries' close economic links within Aladi, the River Plate basin, and integration projects such as the Paraguay-Parana Waterway Project (Port Caceres-Nueva Palmira).

According to Article 20 of the Asuncion Treaty, the common market will be open through negotiations to all Aladi members. The application of any of those governments will be examined by the country members five years from the date this treaty entered into effect.

The declaration says, however, that member countries might consider the application of Aladi members which do not participate in other subregional integration projects or extraregional associations before that time, and that the approval must be unanimous.

The four ministers considered the message sent by Chilean President Patricio Aylwin an important expression of support to the integration process that began with the signing of the Asuncion Treaty.

The foreign ministers of Argentina, Paraguay, Brazil, and Uruguay share the Chilean president's evaluation of the historic importance of this treaty for Latin American integration.

According to the third foreign ministers' declaration, the four countries admit "with great pleasure the decision of the Chilean Government to strengthen its links with Mercosur member countries. [no closing quotation as published]

Chile is not a Mercosur member because of the great economic instability of the four member countries. Argentine President Carlos Menem refuted this remark saying that instability is not the exclusive patrimony of "our countries." Menem cited the integration of Spain and Portugal into the EEC despite their economic situations. "Chile cannot overlook this opportunity," Menem stressed.

Aladi Announces 'Record' High Sales for 1990

PY3003122891 Madrid EFE in English 0435 GMT 30 Mar 91

[Text] Montevideo, March 29 (EFE)—The Uruguay-based Latin American Integration Association (LAIA) [Aladi] announced Friday that total 1990 foreign sales for the 11-nation trade bloc reached a record $110 billion.

Export sales within LAIA accounted for 10 per cent of member countries' total exports, which rose by seven per cent over 1989.

Higher oil prices sparked by the Gulf war accounted for $4 billion of the record amount. Oil producing member nations Venezuela, Mexico, Colombia and Ecuador together had a 20 per cent increase in total exports.

LAIA's total 1990 imports reached $83 billion, a 15 per cent increase over 1989.

The bloc's members are Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela. LAIA was established in 1980 to replace the less flexible Latin American Free Trade Association, which was set up in 1960 to reduce trade barriers and lay the foundation for a Latin American common market.

Cuba

Withdrawal of Troops From Congo Announced

FL3003124691 Havana Tele Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 30 Mar 91

[Text] The Revolutionary Armed Forces [FAR] Ministry has reported the following:

The Governments of the Republic of Cuba and of the People's Republic of the Congo have mutually agreed to withdraw the Cuban internationalist troops in that sister country. The victorious return of our combatants will take place during the first days of April.

The various dangers that were threatening the Congolese revolution made the top authorities of the two countries decide to deploy a special tactical group composed of Cuban internationalist combatants in Pointe-Noire in 1977.

Thousands of Cubans have modestly fulfilled their internationalist duty in that country for 14 years. Our combatants have always received the greatest show of hospitality and respect by the Congolese authorities and people.

The successful fulfillment of this important mission will also be part of our fatherland's beautiful internationalist traditions and the history of friendship and solidarity between the Congolese and Cuban peoples.

Ministry of the FAR.

French Senate Delegation Concludes 6-Day Visit

Fidel Castro Attends Reception

FL2903151591 Havana Tele Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, president of the Councils of State and Ministers, attended a reception last night hosted by the French Embassy in honor of the delegation of French senators visiting Cuba since last Saturday. At the embassy Fidel spoke with many personalities, but primarily with the head of the French delegation, Mr. Jean Lecanuet, chairman of the Foreign Affairs, Armed Forces, and Defense Commission of the French Senate.

The delegation, composed of seven senators representing the most diverse political ideologies of France, will conclude its visit today. The members of the delegation have been meeting with leading officials of the Cuban State, Government, and parliament since last Saturday.

[Begin recording] [Castro] Everything has gone quite well. They had a very busy schedule. This has given us an opportunity to admire the endurance of the French senators. He [Lecanuet] was decorated for his participation in the war, in the resistance. Right?

[Lecanuet] Yes.

[Castro] As a resistance fighter, but he deserves another medal now for the rigorous way in which he has completed the rigorous agenda. It has been a great honor to have the delegation visit. It has been very satisfying and very pleasant. We have talked as Latins. We cannot forget that the French and the Cubans.... [changes thought] Well, the French are much more Latin than we. We are a mix, a very good mix. We have in common the language, the culture, and many other common-origin ties that go back many centuries, especially in the region of Santiago de Cuba which they visited.

French visitors are always warmly welcomed, especially this delegation of senators of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Commission. They visited China last year and now they visit Cuba to better understand the land, the crops, the history, and the points of view. I think this practice is a very good and useful one. They are very responsible men and have an extremely high capacity for work. [end recording]

The French senators also toured some agricultural camps in Havana Province. They were accompanied by Roberto Robaina, alternate Politburo member and first secretary of the UJC [Union of Young Communists]. The delegation has been in Cuba since 23 March.

The tour included a UJC and El Paraiso camp. The young members of the camp described to the senators their work schedule and the morale that prevails in the units. Senator Jean Lecanuet, chairman of the Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Armed Forces Commission of the French Senate, praised the way in which the camps stimulate the youth's interest in agricultural tasks.

U.S. Embargo Deemed Harmful

PA3003173691 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2233 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] Havana, 29 Mar (NOTIMEX)—French Senator Michel Poniatowski said today that Cuba's greatest problem is that the United States persists with its economic embargo against the island, but he believes there will be no military aggression.

The legislator for the rightist "French Democracy" party said that the United States "has not modified" its attitude toward Cuba in 30 years, while the Cuban Government "would like the relationship to change and evolve."

Poniatowski visited Cuba this week as part of a delegation from the French Senate which requested permission to visit the island, following the initiative of the parliament's Defense and Armed Forces Commission.

During an interview with NOTIMEX following a meeting with several Cuban leaders, the French senator said that Havana's government has been forced to "redefine its diplomatic strategy as a consequence of the socialist bloc's downfall." Poniatowski said that "the

disappearance of the former socialist bloc from the Cuban map has meant a considerable loss for the Caribbean nation."

The group of seven French senators arrived in Cuba on 22 March to gather "fresh" information on the Cuban situation. The group concluded that "the island must try to attract the EC's attention."

Cuba's rapprochement to Latin America as part of the "redefinition of its diplomatic strategy, is not an economic solution," said Poniatowski.

Latin America's potential for cooperation and economic assistance to Cuba "is very limited," said the French legislator, although he said that "there are not many other possible sources of assistance and cooperation either."

He added that this is so because the powers "have their own worries" now that there is a new definition of forces and balances in the world. Germany is concerned with its unification. Great Britain has its eyes set on the United States, and France is interested in Africa, he said.

The group of French senators, headed by Jean Lecanuet, the president of the Defense and Armed Forces Foreign Affairs Commission of the parliament, met on 28 March with Cuban President Fidel Castro.

Country's Achievements Viewed

FL3003020591 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 0005 GMT 30 Mar 91

[From the "Exclusivo" program]

[Text] This afternoon the delegation of French senators concluded a one-week visit to Cuba; they had traveled here at the invitation of the National Assembly of the People's Government. Union of the Center Senator Jean Lecanuet, president of the French Senate's Commission for Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Armed Forces, headed the delegation, which was made up of six other senators from the Socialist, Communist, Democratic Left, Union for French Democracy, and Rally for the Republic Parties. A few minutes before leaving the senator made the following statements to Rebelde's Exclusivo.

[Begin Lecanuet recording in French with simultaneous translation into Spanish] In my opinion—and I do not think I am the only one of the delegation who thinks this—we were able to confirm that Cuba has had successes and achievements in many fields, in which it has made giant strides. I am going to list them quickly for you, because you [words indistinct] and you know about them. There is education, to the extent of having universities and centers with a high level of scientific achievement, such as the biotechnology center. It is the same in the case of health care.

If I were to summarize something about the social sphere, what I feel is that even though the country is poor one does not see poverty. Therefore, there is a lesson here of solidarity and social concern which we French want to salute. We were also able to see, from the internal point of view, the importance the Cuban Government gives to what they call rectification, and what they call the special period. Here one would not need to be a prophet to say that when a country has the courage to talk about rectifying mistakes, it is in a situation of evolution and transformation. [end recording]

Final Comments Before Departure

PA3003043891 Havana International Service in Spanish 0020 GMT 30 Mar 91

[Report by Beatriz Padron; place and date not given; italicized passages are recorded; Lecanuet speaks in French with simultaneous translation into Spanish]

[Text] Jean Lecanuet, president of the French Senate's Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Armed Forces Commission, was truly impressed with Cuban development in such areas as health and education. Lecanuet, who headed a delegation of French senators, with different political orientations, ended a six-day visit to Cuba on Friday, 29 March.

[Lecanuet] *If I were to summarize the social situation, I would say this is a country that is still poor, but misery is not visible. Therefore, a lesson of solidarity and social concern is being taught here, which we, the French, would like to recognize.*

In statements to the media before boarding the plane that took him back to France, Lecanuet said that the visit has contributed to the strengthening of friendly ties between Cuba and France.

Lecanuet added that he was able to verify that Cuba has made significant progress in many areas, including the educational level of the population and the progress achieved by science and health institutions, many of which are comparable to the best in the world.

He pointed out that he was able to observe the Cuban leadership's efforts to rectify mistakes and negative tendencies, and said that such decision serves as display of courage and optimism.

[Lecanuet] *We could also see, from the internal point of view, the importance attached by the Cuban Government to what they call rectification, the so-called special period. It is not necessary to be a prophet to be able to say that when a country has the courage to talk about rectifying its mistakes, it finds itself in a situation of evolution and transformation.*

Lecanuet also talked about the changes in the process of democratizing Cuban society—a process which should gain in strength following the Fourth Cuban Communist Party Congress. Lecanuet talked about the changes that are taking place in the international community, particularly in the USSR, and the influence of these changes on the Cuban economy. He said that it is beneficial for

Cuba to trade with other nations, especially with the EEC countries such as France, Spain, and Portugal.

[Lecanuet] *We believe that France, Spain, Italy, and Portugal constitute an important part of the EEC. This part of the EEC should be able to interest the remaining EEC members in Latin America and particularly Cuba, which has shown its ability to deal with the various stages of progress.*

The head of the French delegation added that, upon his return to France, he will ask President Francois Mitterand to promote Franco-Cuban cooperation, because Cuba has demonstrated that it knows how to make proper use of its resources.

'Dissident Source' Reports on Released Prisoners

PA3103183991 Paris AFP in Spanish 1545 GMT 31 Mar 91

[Text] Havana, 31 Mar—It has been learned from a dissident source in Havana that Rodolfo Fromenta Caballero—a Cuban who had immigrated to the United States, was arrested when he returned to Cuba for a visit, and then sentenced to 20 years in prison in 1981—was released on the night of 29 March.

According to the same source, Rodolfo Fromenta had been condemned for "espionage." He immigrated to the United States in the early seventies and later returned to Cuba in the early eighties to visit his family in eastern Cuba.

He was also accused of forming part of the anti-Castroite paramilitary organization Alfa 66, created in the United States, and of having returned to Cuba to organize "subversion," the same source added.

Rodolfo Fromenta will soon return to the United States. Last week, the Cuban authorities also released Ernesto Diaz Rodriguez, one of the last two "steadfast recalcitrant" prisoners—that is, those who reject the island's prison regulations.

Renewal of TV Marti Broadcasts Reviewed

PA2903135591 Havana International Service in Spanish 0100 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Interview with Arnaldo Coro Antis by Pedro Martinez Pirez on the "Among Colleagues" program—live]

[Text] [Martinez] Today we will analyze a report from Key West in the United States. The U.S. Government decided to renew the so-called TV Marti broadcasts to Cuba on Thursday, 28 March. We have invited our colleague, Arnaldo Coro Antis, acting chief of information in Radio Progreso. He is a Cuban professor and researcher, and he cooperates with our radio station, particularly concerning the English programs, and he was one of Radio Havana's founders approximately 30 years ago. Arnaldo Coro Antis has participated in several forums, both in Cuba and abroad, and he has presented studies and given lectures on the television aggression. He is truly one of the journalists who has most closely followed TV Marti's case. That is why we have invited him to our program, Among Colleagues, on Radio Havana.

Coro, first of all, I would like to hear your views about this renewal of broadcasts. I believe that it is important to tell our listeners that the broadcasts, using a balloon, were suspended on 16 January, slightly over two months ago. Apparently the stationary balloon, owned by the Air Force, was dragged down by the wind and crashed near Shark Point, at Everglades National Park, in the United States. That ended the broadcasts—using a stationary balloon to rebroadcast the signal to Cuba—for more than two months.

It is well known that our country has reported this as part of the U.S. aggression against Cuba. A basic and permanent element of this aggression is the U.S. blockade, which has lasted for more than three decades. What is your opinion? Why were TV Marti's broadcasts to Cuba, using a balloon, renewed at this time?

[Coro] I think that, aside from the technological issue of this unusual television station—it is the only station in the world that uses an antenna located 3,000 meters off the ground, and the International Telecommunications Union did not allow the station to be registered in its book of authorized stations precisely because it violates all existing regulations on televised transmissions around the world—this renewal, Martinez Pirez, represents the Bush administration's political will to renew what is nothing but an act of harassment against Cuba.

TV Marti's broadcasts on Channel 13 of the NTSC standard simply invade our radio frequency spectrum and violate all international telecommunication norms, including the 1982 Nairobi International Agreement on Telecommunications, which was ratified by the U.S. Senate. Therefore, it must be adhered to by the United States.

[Martinez] Coro, I think it is important to tell our listeners that TV Marti has never been seen in Cuba, and you can give an idea of how Cuban technicians have managed to protect the national sovereignty by preventing the signal from reaching our country—even during the early morning hours—despite the U.S. Government's pretext that this was being done through a channel that was reportedly not being used by Cuban television.

[Coro] Well, first of all, it is interesting to mention that this was a matter of principle. One of these principles is that a country's sovereignty—using the current definition, in the latter part of the 20th century—include the radio frequency spectrum. The International Telecommunications Union clearly defines this. Each country is sovereign in the use of its radio frequency spectrum.

The United States invades Cuba's radio frequency spectrum by using television signals, which are specifically aimed at

the Cuban capital; and it was precisely this violation of Cuba's sovereignty which compelled the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Cuba to adopt the decision not to let this signal enter our territory.

This decision resulted in the installation of the necessary equipment to fully occupy the spectrum between 210 kHz and 216 mHz for the duration of the Cudjoe Key television station—which is the one that carries Radio Marti's program—broadcasts. In other words, the television channel is fully occupied, using technical equipment designed and built in Cuba, in the area in which the station's broadcasts are beamed—and for the duration of the station's broadcasts.

[Martinez] Coro, I think that it is important to point out that TV Marti's illegal broadcasts to Cuba have naturally been foiled by our country's technical efficiency. Nevertheless, they represent an ominous precedent for Latin America and the Third World because powerful countries are currently establishing a new international order. It is clear that the new international order implicitly includes the televised message, the cultural message. It is the new colonization of the world through television, video, movies, etc.

The battle being waged in Cuba is obviously a battle which interests Latin America and the Third World, and it unmasks the hypocrisy of U.S. foreign policy. We recently saw how the United States launched a gigantic military operation—which has the world still shaking—to defend Kuwait's sovereignty and independence. However, here, 90 miles from the U.S. coast, there exists a country, a small country in the Caribbean, which has been subject to constant violations of its sovereignty for 32 years.

We are talking about television and radio violations, because Radio Marti is still around, and it is also a violation of Cuba's sovereignty. The U.S. economic blockade is still being implemented. Colombian writer Gabriel Garcia Marquez has stated that this represents the gravest human rights violation ever perpetrated in this hemisphere during this century. We must also mention the naval base in Guantanamo which, as it is well known, is maintained against the will if the Cuban Government and people.

There are also other problems pending solution, including immigration problems. A serious negotiation of the Cuban-U.S. dispute is still pending; and the United States should respect Cuba and treat it as a sovereign country. The United States is evidently not willing to do this. We could talk at length about this topic but time has run out. Thank you, Arnaldo Coro Antis, acting chief of information of Radio Progreso, for accompanying me in the Among Colleagues segment.

Soviet Ambassador Discusses Trade Links

PA2903144991 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2348 GMT 27 Mar 91

[Text] Havana, 27 Mar (NOTIMEX)—It was announced today that during the first quarter of this year primary Soviet exports to Cuba are being delivered late, but the amount of supplies being shipped is in line with the Soviet-Cuban commercial agreement. The agreement was signed last year.

Soviet Ambassador to Cuba Yuriy Petrov has said that there has been noncompliance in the shipment of oil from his country to the Caribbean island because of transportation problems.

During a news conference the diplomat admitted that the negotiations to alter bilateral commercial conditions and to adopt the market price system "were not concluded during the first quarter of the year as had been planned."

Petrov explained that in the framework of changes in trade relations, the Cuban Government has encountered obstacles in trying to sign import contracts with Soviet enterprises since in the past it used to negotiate with central state organizations.

In December 1990, the Soviet Union and Cuba signed a "commercial transition agreement" to adjust their commercial links to international market price patterns.

Hector Rodriguez, president of the National Bank of Cuba, is in Moscow to negotiate a new bilateral agreement with the Soviet authorities, Petrov said.

The negotiations for restructuring Soviet-Cuban commercial ties should have concluded during the first quarter of the year, but the domestic situation in the Soviet Union and the changes in the Soviet cabinet "have obstructed the work," Petrov noted.

The Soviet ambassador to Havana said his government and that of Cuba "are very interested in complying with the supply agreement that covers the first half of this year. [no closing quotation mark as received]

In December of last year, the Soviet Union made the commitment to supply up to 10,000 tons of oil to Cuba this year. This amount is similar to the amount received by the Caribbean country last year.

Plan To Relocate Workers, Aid Unemployed Viewed

PA3103154691 Havana International Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 31 Mar 91

[Commentary by Amalia Sanmartin]

[Text] The so-called special period in times of peace—a period that has been adopted in Cuba to overcome the country's economic adversities—is necessitating the creation of new labor regulations. Therefore, there is a

surplus of workers in some working centers. However, that does not mean that they have been abandoned.

The reduction of fuel supplies, changes in some institutions, and the elimination of some positions have prompted the State Committee for Labor and Social Security [CETSS] to create alternatives to relocate surplus workers. It was decided that some of them can be relocated to working centers close to their homes or receive qualification or requalification courses. They can also be employed in agricultural or construction jobs.

The CETSS announced that workers who cannot be relocated because of their health or other reasons, including a lack of jobs, will receive their full salaries the first month and 60 percent thereafter. Those workers will not lose their original labor rights, and whenever 60 percent of their salaries is not enough to cover their needs, social welfare will take care of those cases.

Carlos Aldana, secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba, recently said that the main objective during the current phase is to create an economic strategy that gives priority to development. This is the reason for the importance attached to the food program, which is aimed at achieving self-sufficiency in the agricultural field; to scientific advancement; and to tourism.

Therefore, the difficulties caused by the collapse of some socialist countries and the internal situation in the USSR—which have caused a deterioration in trade relations with Cuba—have created tension within all labor and development sectors. However, as we said at the beginning, even though some workers may temporarily lose their jobs as a result of reorganization, Cuban society protects all those who need help.

Cuba To Participate in Venezuelan Trade Fair

PA3003171191 Havana International Service in Spanish 0053 GMT 30 Mar 91

[Report by Isis Maria Allen]

[Text] Cuba will occupy the pavilion of honor at the 16th International Fair in Venezuela, which will take place in the city of Valencia between 8 and 17 April. This will be the first time that the largest island of the Antilles will be represented in this type of event.

Ocilia Travieso, director of the Cuban pavilion, provided much information here in Havana on the variety of products that will be displayed by 30 enterprises and productive institutions from the island.

[Begin Travieso recording] We will have the traditional exports such as rum, tobacco, nickel, fruit, fresh preserves, and sports articles, which will also be sold at the fair. We will also have medical supplies such as interferon, the anti-meningococcal vaccine, which is an exclusive product. [end recording]

The Cuban Chamber of Commerce plans on carrying out its biggest promotional achievement of the year at the fair in Valencia, Venezuela. To do so, its associates have been working in close cooperation with the Foreign Trade Ministry. It also plans to promote the creation of mutually advantageous associations to help out cooperatives, mixed enterprises, and others institutions that trade with Venezuelan industrialists and businessmen as well as with other countries that will participate in the fair.

Mexican Tourist Association To Provide Advice

FL3003185291 Havana Tele Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 30 Mar 91

[Report by Hilda Prieto]

[Text] In a meeting with reporters, Mr. Jose Luis Isidor Castro, president of the Mexican Association of Higher Education Tourism Centers, Amextur, confirmed that the association will provide advice to our country through a two-stage program. The first stage will begin next May when Mexican specialists will begin teaching a higher level inter-disciplinary course. Another training program is scheduled to be taught later. It will be aimed especially at professors of marketing [preceding word in English] or marketing techniques in the tourist sector.

Amextur will also offer scholarships for tourism promotion, videos, and specialized magazines.

This is the first time Mr. Isidor Castro has visited Cuba. He made the following remarks:

[Begin Isidor recording] I leave with a very pleasant impression because of your efforts to remodel tourist installations so that they are more comfortable. I believe that these efforts, as well as your current program, will be a very important factor in participating in the competitive tourist market. [end recording]

Amextur was founded in 1961 and is currently comprised of over 60 higher education tourist centers from various Mexican universities.

* Limited Hotel Access for Nationals Criticized

91P40200A Havana JUVENTUD REBELDE in Spanish 2 Mar 91 p 5

[Article by Carmen Caminas and Jose Maso; first paragraph is JUVENTUD REBELDE introduction]

[Text] On weekdays in the capital, with its 2.5 million residents, there are 300 to 400 vacancies, on average, in hotels of various categories. In the best hotels, many people usually receive a flat "no" when they try to get a room. Among other things, it seems there is prejudice among [hotel] administrators towards domestic tourists.

Pepe and his wife will celebrate their 15th wedding anniversary on Wednesday. They envisioned enjoying a few days of relaxation in a hotel in the city, but they arrived on Friday and were unable to get anything.

What happened to them is pretty much a daily occurrence in Havana: people looking for lodging and receiving an emphatic "no" at the hotel desk even when there are vacancies.

JUVENTUD REBELDE reporters verified this on 29 January when they made a tour, between 1700 and 1900, of the Triton, Saint John, Vedado, Capri, and Habana Libre hotels where they—like Pepe and company—received a negative reply.

The next day, however, they confirmed that on the night of 29 January some of the city's main hotels had occupancy levels, which were considerably below normal: Triton, 41.7 percent; Saint John, 69.3 percent; Capri, 41.7 percent; and Habana Libre, 60.89 percent.

A few days earlier in the Habana Libre and the Triton, the administrators acknowledged to JUVENTUD REBELDE that at some point each day they instruct the hotel desk to restrict the entrance of "patio" guests [poorly mannered, presumably Cuban, guests]. This almost always occurs when the number of Cuban lodgers approaches 100.

Why the restrictions? In the first place, say the managers of these hotels, because of the property damage caused by Cubans, and the plundering of room service. The "patio" tourists are said to suffer from the disease, which consists of making constant and excessive requests for snacks and beer, to consume or to take out—and they even want the empty bottles.

Even in the areas exclusively for tourist use—restaurants or cabarets—they try to get their friends and relatives in line. Of course, not everyone behaves in this manner.

Erasmo Brito, vice director of Turhoteles, acknowledged that the principal reason for the poor behavior of Cubans, which has caused prejudice among hotel operators, is the lack of a tourist culture in our population. For many, says Brito, tourism is only eating, going to the cabaret, drinking beer, and bathing in the pool. We do not know how to enjoy the other options; we do not know how to feel like tourists. Rather, we go to hotels to overcome the deficiencies in our homes.

Nevertheless, of the 2,578 commercial rooms which Turhoteles has each day in the capital, about 1,000 Cubans—primarily newlywed couples who get special attention—sleep in them each night.

It is enough to point out that in the last quarter of 1990 alone, more than 900 couples received confirmation of lodging in the capital. Last 15 January, for example, 72 Cubans enjoyed their honeymoon in the Triton hotel.

When these reporters tried, in vain, through various means to get a room last week in the Habana Libre the answer was "no" without any explanation. Elsewhere, it was attributed to the scarcity of food, and the majority of hotels said they were expecting the arrival of massive numbers of foreign tourists.

In truth, since its inauguration in 1991, the Hotel Capri has never achieved more than 65 percent occupancy, except for the fifth of last month when it registered an occupancy level of 91 percent.

It had a 65.8 percent occupancy rate on the second of the month, 40.5 percent on the seventh, 53.8 percent on the 11th, and 45 percent on the 16th. Neither foreign tourists nor access to Cubans; empty but content.

With the exception of periods of greater attendance resulting from international events, the Habana Libre has had occupancy levels of about 70 percent; and even when they tried to use the shortage of food as a justification, the truth is that only at the beginning of the year, as is always the case, they were short of ingredients for sausage and there was a certain scarcity of rum. Nothing more than that.

Although there is abuse of hotel facilities and services by the Cuban public, Intur [National Institute of Tourism] management feels that the solution to this problem cannot be to deny lodging to domestic tourists.

The management of the organization explained that there is an organizational mechanism to monitor availability but that this is, incorrectly, reserved solely for the movements of foreigners.

He also acknowledged that there is, in fact, an unwillingness on the part of hotel employees to wait on Cuban tourists because of the problems they cause.

By way of an example, the Intur administration cited the case of the people who asked room service for snacks for 20 people and a case of beer—unopened—and afterwards carried this in a bag to relatives waiting in the lobby.

The Intur administration indicated that each day in the capital there are 300 to 400 empty rooms in the 20 facilities operated by Turhoteles (two of these, the Inglaterra and the Victoria, are reserved exclusively for tourists). And although this number is insufficient for a population of more than 2 million inhabitants economically able to guarantee immediate full occupancy, it is certain that they are not always rented out; among other reasons, this is because the domestic guests have, at times, resisted leaving the facilities at the prearranged time. This creates a difficult situation on weekends when the majority of international guests arrive.

It is true, acknowleged Intur, that Cubans are denied rooms and that this has never been the policy of the organization. However, it is also true that they rent an average of 500 rooms to "patio" guests each day.

With the arguments presented here, it is possible to suggest that if there is a mechanism to control, at each step, the availability of rooms in the city, it should be put into operation to handle Cuban requests and establish strict control over the use of each facility and services so that whoever breaks, steals, or consumes in excess would have to pay for the damage caused.

The important income that these installations represent for the national economy is understood and everyone agrees that international tourism receives priority with regard to their use. But anytime there is excess capacity, the policy is—and it must be complied with—to make these rooms available to Cubans.

British Virgin Islands

Elections Supervisor Seeks Proxy Law Revision

FL2803212991 Bridgetown CANA in English 2018 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Road Town, Tortola, March 28, CANA—The supervisor of elections in the British Virgin Islands [BVI], Eugenia Todman-Smith, wants a change in the proxy voting law.

"There is no doubt that (in the November election) the proxy voting process involved some irregularities," she stated in a report tabled in the BVI legislative council. "During the writing of this report, letters were received from registered voters who are currently resident in Barbados and Jamaica, in which the writers claimed that they had not sent any proxy applications," she admitted. This suggested, she added, that "the proxy provision may be abused by some candidates or their supporters.

"It is recommended that the government considers very seriously whether the gains, if any, from this measure, are worth the problems involved."

The Todman-Smith report recommended more effective methods for verification of who qualifies as a voter, measures to ensure ballot secrecy, and education on the electoral process. The BVI elections laws were amended last September.

The supervisor of elections said a number of problems associated with and caused by the amendments to the bill "need to be addressed urgently and should not wait for the approach of another general election or a by-election."

Trinidad and Tobago

Robinson Predicts Renewed Economic Growth

FL2903151091 Bridgetown CANA in English 1355 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] Port of Spain, Trinidad, March 29, CANA—Trinidad and Tobago seems headed for renewed economic growth this year, for the first time in eight years, Prime Minister A.N.R. Robinson said on Thursday.

"...The signs are undoubtedly encouraging," he told the Port of Spain Chamber of Commerce at their annual general meeting.

"There has been a progressive slowing down in the rate of decline experienced over the past eight years, with strong prognosis for the beginning of renewed growth this year."

The Caribbean Community's only net petroleum exporter has been experiencing recession since the early eighties, but saw a decline in the unemployment rate for the first time in eight years in 1990, said Robinson. He said other encouraging signs included a 1990 trade surplus, which was the highest since 1982, improvement in the country's foreign reserves, and revenues accumulated last year, which grew faster than expenditure.

"Overall, it cannot be disputed that the outlook for the economy is very positive," he told the businessmen.

The prime minister of the twin-island state said that while government's policies have sought to create a climate for increased domestic business and a return of investor confidence, unemployment continues to remain a critical problem.

He said, "economic recovery and growth are of course essential for increased employment, but additional policy measures are necessary to maximise job creation."

A tripartite team comprising government, labour, and business, said Robinson, was currently formulating various approaches towards a solution, both in short and long-term. He said government, through its education plan, will seek to produce the type of individual with the orientation of mind who can adapt easily to the challenging domestic and international environment.

"The system will be designed to produce graduates with a strong capacity for engaging in research and in development activities," the prime minister said.

El Salvador

FMLN's Commander Martinez on Peace Talks

PA0104024991 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1736 GMT 31 Mar 91

[Text] Mexico City, 31 Mar (NOTIMEX)—FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] commander Ana Guadalupe Martinez has stated that the future of El Salvador depends on the gradual dismantling of the Armed Forces and the Salvadoran guerrilla force, "which are fighting, inspired by antagonistic interests."

In an interview published in the newspaper UNOMASUNO, Martinez, a member of the political-diplomatic committee of the FMLN, said that "El Salvador has the potential to develop and overcome the crisis as long as there are no armies."

Martinez pointed out that before the Salvadoran guerrillas appeared a few years ago, no one dared to speak ill of the soldiers who have systematically violated human rights in the country for over 10 years.

Martinez, with a political-military background of 16 years, said "that the economic sectors see in the Armed Forces a very serious drain on the national budget."

Martinez added: "The Army is an unproductive institution that is financed by the rest of society, because by itself it does not produce anything to finance itself."

Martinez stated that the military has been an element of intimidation and persecution for politicians who oppose the regime. The Christian Democratic Party has said that in a military-free society, the ideas of all men are respected and pluralism prevail, she added.

Martinez further said that the FMLN proposed to President Alfredo Cristiani that once the Army is dismantled, "the people themselves can become the guarantee for the sovereignty of the country, despite the fact that some sectors of the population support the military structure, which defends their interests, as opposed to those of the insurgent population."

Martinez added that the dismantling of the Army would not be implemented over the short term. First, she said, after signing the cease-fire agreement at the negotiating table, the Army should be purged, the repressive corps should be dismantled, and those responsible for wrongdoings should be punished.

Then, she noted, the longest and most complicated process—based on the dismantling of both the Army and the FMLN forces—would take place.

The rebel commander commented that the demilitarization and democratization plan has "a social justice component," because the possibility that the regime would repress discontented people would no longer exist.

Martinez said that political and economic discussion between the different sectors "will shape the democracy for which the revolutionary and national democratic forces are struggling."

The FMLN and the Salvadoran Government will continue their direct negotiations in April, under the auspices of the United Nations. The negotiations should be based on the latest peace plan presented by the rebels in Managua, Nicaragua, prior to the San Jose VII ministers meeting.

The plan allows for negotiations between military forces from both sides and other commissions to discuss reforms to the constitution, the cease-fire, and international verification of the agreements that the opposing parties may have attained.

According to the Salvadoran guerrillas, by 30 May at the latest, both parties should have attained agreements on the three basic points of the Caracas agenda—"the Armed Forces, constitutional reform, and the cease-fire."

Commander on Recent Clashes, 'Low Morale' in Army

PA3003192291 (Clandestine) Radio Farabundo Marti in Spanish to El Salvador 0000 GMT 27 Mar 91

[Interview via walkie-talkie with Commander Hector Martinez of the National Army for Democracy by an unidentified station announcer in Chalatenango on 26 March—live or recorded]

[Text] [Announcer] People of El Salvador: On 25 March in Chalatenango, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] conducted an operation against troops from Military Detachment No. 1 Sierpes Battalion. As you all know, the Army suffered 61 casualties. Commander Hector Martinez, would you explain how yesterday's clashes went?

[Martinez] Very well, comrade. I am truly very pleased to report to the Salvadoran people on the victories we experienced on 25 March in Tepeyac, Las Canas, and [name indistinct]. Can you hear me?

[Announcer] Go ahead. I can hear you.

[Martinez] The maneuvers began at 0440. We attacked four companies from Military Detachment No. 1 who were in the area. The maneuvers were really a success because we attacked the enemy in his own territory in Chalatenango. These maneuvers have had a strong impact on our forces, who dealt a powerful blow against the enemy. The enemy's response and attitude were defensive because the only support they could receive was artillery fire, and this was ineffective. They could not prevent our attack.

I believe that our effective and successful attacks on 25 March on the outskirts of Chalatenango have yielded good results. There were 61 casualties: 50 wounded and 11 killed. [Words indistinct] an officer, a captain who

had been a battalion leader. These are irreparable losses for the enemy. In view of the enemy's weaknesses, our forces are prepared to attack them at any point and prevent the high command's offensive incursions into zones under our control.

[Announcer] Commander Hector Martinez, over the past few weeks the Army has responded to your attacks with massive artillery attacks. Why, in your opinion, has the Army responded this way?

[Martinez] This response is understandable. It is the result of the Army's low morale; the Army is not responding to the high command's goals. Its morale is very low and it has a defeatist mentality [mentalidad de guinda]. To this I can add that its aerial support has been nil. The Army's aerial support has been undermined by our antiaircraft attacks, and the aerial support that it does have has been passive.

During the clashes on 25 March, mortar fire was directed at towns such as Guarjila where the people have been terrorized. The Army destroyed a considerable amount of property in the towns surrounding Guarjila. I believe that the Army is using its artillery support to terrorize the Salvadoran people rather than harm our forces. I also believe that the Army has been forced to use its artillery discriminately because it knows that it is not effective. The enemy's goal is to create panic among the civilian population.

Radio Venceremos on Clashes Between FMLN, Army

PA3003170091

[Editorial report] From 24-29 March, Radio Venceremos carried the following reports on recent clashes that took place between Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) guerillas and Salvadoran Army Troops.

(Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador at 0000 GMT on 24 March carries a five-minute report on fighting waged "on 24 March between the National Army for Democracy (END) and the Bracamonte Battalion in Piedra Labrada, San Jose Guayabal, Cuscatlan Department; the Bracamonte Battalion suffered six casualties." On the same day, END troops clashed with Cacahuatique Battalion troops in Villa El Rosario, Morazan Department, resulting in two casualties. The report adds that fighting took place against commandos of the 3d Infantry Brigade and the Marine Infantry Battalion in Miramar, Joyona, and El Playon, Usulutan Department on 23 March.

(Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador at 0000 GMT on 27 March carries a two-minute report saying that another counterinsurgency operation began on Guazapa Hill on 26 March. The guerrilla report states that Bracamonte Battalion troops were replaced by the Belloso Battalion, on which the guerrillas inflicted "a total of four casualties caused by mines, two on Campanario Hill and the other two on Los Lirios Hill."

Venceremos also reports that the FMLN conducted a maneuver against Sierpe Battalion troops from Military Detachment No. 1 in the area of Tepeyac, Las Canas, and Chiapas, Chalatenango Department on 25 March. "As a result 61 casualties were inflicted on the Army," Venceremos claims.

Guatemala

URNG States Position on Oslo Negotiations

PA2903155791 Guatemala City PRENSA LIBRE in Spanish 25 Mar 91 pp 15, 24

[Communique issued by the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG) signed by Commanders Rolando Moran, Gaspar Ilom, Pablo Monsanto, and Carlos Gonzalez; place and date not given]

[Text] The URNG General Command position on the peace process:

Because of the respect we owe the people, the political and social sectors with which we have talked and signed joint statements, international public opinion, and friendly governments and countries seriously interested in peace and in the democratization of Guatemala, we have to clarify the unilateral and partial information made public by the Guatemalan Government and Army on the state of the conversations they are holding with the URNG General Command.

1. The URNG General Command has been proposing initiatives and accepting proposals from the National Reconciliation Commission and has maintained a constructive attitude to lead the dialogue process initiated with the Oslo agreement to a successful conclusion. What is pending is a dialogue between the government, the Army, and the URNG.

2. In our opinion the Oslo process is blocked, but this is not what the Guatemalan Government and the Army spokesmen have been telling the people.

The talks have been blocked by the government's refusal to accept holding a public meeting to begin the negotiations between the government, the Army, and the URNG.

3. In view of foiled efforts to set up a meeting between the government and the URNG, the URNG General Command on 14 March delivered a proposal for a meeting between the parties involved. The meeting would take place on the occasion of the first anniversary of the March 1990 agreement. The proposal for the meeting in Oslo was delivered in Mexico to Monsignor Rodolfo Quezada Toruno, a conciliator and chairman of the National Reconciliation Commission, in the presence of Dr. Francesco Vendrell, personal representative of the UN secretary general and who acts as the UN observer. In view of this, President Serrano has engaged in a big propaganda campaign about being in favor of signing in Oslo a "total peace" agreement, but without

referring to what would be the basis of the political solution he is proposing for the armed conflict in the country, or to the democratization process in Guatemala. We have not been informed about that.

4. The URNG General Command believes that what is important now is to break the impasse and to unclog the Oslo agreement by the government and the URNG General Command holding a meeting.

5. At this meeting, the government and the URNG could agree on a serious and continuous negotiation process that would culminate with peace in Guatemala.

Agreements could be the subject of verification by the UN secretary general and by the National Reconciliation Commission.

6. Peace and democratization in Guatemala must be a serious process so that it can resolve the negative situations that have existed and have been growing worse for the past 30 years.

As we approach the first anniversary of the Oslo agreement, we want to state our political decision and will to find, through negotiations, a road that will lead to a firm and lasting peace and to the democratization of Guatemalan society, its institutions, and structures—all in a climate of social justice.

Five Soldiers, One Honduran Citizen Killed

PA2903225891 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1527 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Guatemala City, 28 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—A citizen of Honduras and five Guatemalan soldiers were killed in violent circumstances during the past several hours, official sources reported on 28 March.

The police reported that Honduran citizen Geovany Chavez Pena, 20, was shot in Tecun Uman, a town on the Mexican border, but did not state whether any suspects have been arrested.

Private Israel Hernandez, 23, killed two of his comrades with a German rifle on the El Amatillo farm, southeast of Guatemala City, belonging to General Jose Benedicto Ortega, inspector general of the Army.

The sources said that Hernandez fired 26 rounds at Leonel Osorio and Edgar Carrillo, after a heated argument during 27 March Easter week holiday celebrations.

The third soldier died during an armed clash with rebels in the northern Alta Verapaz Department.

The sources added that two more soldiers were killed when their truck turned over in the eastern Jalapa Department.

Honduras

Discua on Relations With U.S. Armed Forces

PA2903125991 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1918 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Interview with General Luis Alonso Discua Elvir, Armed Forces commander in chief, by unidentified reporters in Tegucigalpa on 26 March—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] [Reporter] Regarding relations between the United States and Honduras, in view of today's ceremony, are they growing stronger, improving, General?

[Discua] Definitely. This is a change of command between two people who will be in charge of the U.S. Military Group. I believe that there is a positive relationship between the Honduran Armed Forces and the U.S. Armed Forces.

[Reporter] Will the National Defense College have the support or the cooperation of the U.S. and Venezuelan Armed Forces?

[Discua] Definitely; that was one of my objectives. Colonel Feliciano has said in his speech that the National Defense College will train perhaps the future leaders, both civilian and military, of this country. They will learn what are the national objectives, interests, and the strategy that will bring about development in the country.

[Reporter] General, in their speeches, both the outgoing and the incoming commanders of the U.S. Military Group in Honduras mentioned the Honduran Army's struggle against drug trafficking. Will this struggle continue to receive the support of the DEA?

[Discua] Definitely. I believe that, currently, one of our most important missions is to fight drug trafficking; in fact, all of the actions that have been carried out went very well.

You have already heard that Honduras will chair the next meeting on the fight against drug trafficking that will be held in Honduras. Several deputies have spoken on this issue. I believe that we need the support of the judicial branch to fight drug trafficking in this country. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] Has it been determined that Gen. Cantarero will travel to Venezuela as ambassador?

[Discua] I cannot think of any reason why the Armed Forces should confirm that. I think that the Venezuelan Government has given its approval and the Honduran Government has nominated him, of course, and he will probably assume that responsibility as soon as possible. [passage omitted]

Announces Drug Units

PA2903140091 San Pedro Sula TIEMPO in Spanish 27 Mar 91 p 5

[Text] Tegucigalpa—Armed Forces Commander General Luis Alonso Discua Elvir has asked the new Legislative Assembly to allow drug trafficking to be attacked firmly. At the same time, he announced that two new anti-drug units have been formed.

Discua told a group of journalists that "one of the most important tasks at present is to combat drug trafficking," but it requires the support of the judicial branch.

"We need the support of the judicial branch to combat drug trafficking," the officer said. However, he refused to question the actions of the courts in the fight against drug trafficking.

The military commander said that the problems that arise when soldiers complain because the courts release arrested alleged drug traffiackers are based on the laws currently in effect.

"New laws must be issued because drug trafficking is a recent crime and new laws must be passed to allow us to combat it firmly," Discua stated.

He announced that two new special units for combatting drug traffic have been formed in the Armed forces.

"The Armed Forces is the institution that is most committed to fighting drug trafficking," the commander said, adding that "the police corps is also taking very positive steps."

General Discua referred to the case of Luis Enrique Araujo, an alleged drug trafficker who was captured in San Pedro Sula. Discua said that "sometimes a person tries to discredit the police who arrested him by stating that they planted the drugs on him." Araujo had said that the cocaine found by the police in his office had been placed there by police agents.

Without being asked, Discua again denied that former Armed Forces Commander General Humberto Regalado Hernandez had turned in Juan Ramon Matta because the latter did not lend him $50 million.

"These are groundless reports," he said, adding: "We are not going to get down to the same level as the criminals."

"The Honduran people must trust the Armed Forces because it is taking on its social and economic role," General Discua asserted.

Panama

Diplomatic Relations With USSR Established

PA3003201891 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1639 GMT 30 Mar 91

[Text] Panama City, 30 Mar (DPA)—The Panamanian Foreign Ministry announced today that diplomatic relations have been established with the Soviet Union. The two countries agreed to open general consulates at a later date.

A government bulletin has reported that Cesar Pereira and Yuliy Vorontsov, Panamanian and Soviet ambassadors to the United Nations, respectively, yesterday signed in New York the communique whereby the two countries agree to establish relations based on equality between the two states and mutual respect for their sovereignty and self-determination, as well as noninterference in their domestic affairs.

According to the document, the establishment of relations at the ambassadorial level will make it easier to reinforce international cooperation and universal peace.

Panamanian Foreign Minister Julio Linares had previously announced his country's intentions to establish relations with the Soviet Union in view of the democratic opening in that country, but the events in Lithuania had forced the postponement of this decision.

The opening of relations was announced after a visit to Panama by members of the Supreme Soviet in November 1990 and after Linares met with Yilkin Georgy and Anatoliy Pashenko, officials of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, on 13 March.

The Soviet Union was the only Eastern European country with which Panama did not hold diplomatic relations. Although diplomatic relations with Eastern nations have existed for several years, Panama is represented in Yugoslavia only.

Foreign Minister Comments on U.S. Military Bases

PA3003004691 Panama City Radio Exitosa in Spanish 2235 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Report on statement by Panamanian Foreign Minister Julio Linares by Jose Cortez Ovalle; place and date not given]

[Text] The U.S. Government has no interest in maintaining military bases in our country and we cannot fail to take advantage of this opportunity. This was stated by Panamanian Foreign Minister Julio Linares.

[Begin Linares recording] The United States has military bases in different places. It has bases in Germany and in Spain, however, I do not think that the sovereignty of those countries has been violated. I want to say that—bearing in mind that it is not my task to negotiate a treaty on military bases—we are all hiding behind the

issue of sovereignty. One of the reasons that I believe that it is not advisable to negotiate a treaty on bases at this time, is because the U.S. policy is to reduce its military bases throughout the world. This means that while the United States has no interest in maintaining its bases, we will offer to negotiate over military bases. Consequently, Panama will obtain meager benefits from the United States in exchange of allowing U.S. bases. [end recording]

Comments on Canal Treaty

PA0104031191 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2353 GMT 31 Mar 91

[Text] Panama City 31 Mar (NOTIMEX)—Panamanian Foreign Minister Julio Linares today did not rule out the possibility that the United States or Japan will try to negotiate a new Panama Canal treaty as a condition to financing the construction of another set of canal locks.

Linares said that although it is "premature" to predict what may happen after the year 2000, when the canal will be turned over to Panamanian administration in keeping with the Torrijos-Carter Treaties, the construction of the locks could involve the participation of the three nations that form the tripartite commission.

"No one gives money for such a project without expecting something in return," Linares said, adding that it would be venturesome to express views when the preliminary studies of the tripartite commission have yet to be concluded and the details are now just a "hypothesis, and one can go very far with just hypotheses."

He said that the 1977 Torrijos-Carter Treaties are unalterable and therefore, the canal's technical and military installations must be turned over to Panama at noon on 31 December 1999.

Nevertheless, he clarified that there is a possibility of negotiating with the member nations of the tripartite commission or with other countries a new agreement for the construction of a canal alternative that will maintain the current waterway's operative and competitive status.

Linares is a candidate for presiding over the consultative commission that will study the future of the sophisticated structures that will revert to Panama. By law, the consultative commission must be comprised of government ministers, but according to Linares, the appointment of members of the executive branch to direct the study is not the most appropriate thing.

Representatives of the tripartite commission have maintained that both the alternative of building a third set of locks and the alternative of a sea-level canal would require considerable amounts of already reverted or soon to be reverted land along the length of the waterway.

Linares said that the consultative commission that will decide the future of the sophisticated structures and properties must be formed by technicians, experts, and professionals who have academic degrees and the ability to draft a proposal, and not by ministers who have countless commitments in their institutions.

The Panamanian foreign minister said that this concern has been made known to President Guillermo Endara, who has asked the University of Panama to make a feasibility study [on canal alternatives] so as to subsequently open to international bidding the drafting of a definite feasibility study for the government.

First Lady Responds to Arias Calderon Speech

PA2903125491 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2330 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Report on interview with First Lady Ana Mae Diaz de Endara by an unidentified reporter in Panama City on 28 March]

[Text] In response to the speech delivered by First Vice President Ricardo Arias Calderon last night, First Lady Ana Mae Diaz de Endara has said it is necessary to reflect over the Easter week.

[Begin recording] [Diaz de Endara] I think that Dr. Ricardo Arias Calderon and all members of the Christian Democratic Party [PDC] should meditate and rest because what I saw yesterday was something.... [changes thought] I believe Dr. Ricardo Arias Calderon was a little arrogant. Perhaps he is too tired and that is why he shouted too much, and he who shouts too much is not right.

[Reporter] Do you harbor resentment toward the PDC?

[Diaz de Endara] There is no resentment. I only want them, as brothers—because we are all brothers—to equally share with the other parties in the alliance as well as with those who are not members of a party, the independents. I would like them to give opportunity to others. As for the things they said yesterday, the truth is that they, themselves, should start thinking about the statements made by Ricardo Arias Calderon. He even contradicted himself because he said he could not take criticism, but he sort of went overboard, saying and shouting that he did not want others to criticize him. Therefore, they should start meditating over the Easter holidays and should realize that they should stop shouting too much and start working instead.

[Reporter] Do you regret having been a member of the PDC?

[Diaz de Endara] I do not regret it. I learned many things from the PDC. I learned what they are, and now I am a member of the Arnulfist Party.

[Reporter] Could you make a comparison?"

[Diaz de Endara] For the sake of comparison, the PDC people, who are in the government now, are too arrogant. They are not plain, ordinary people. They should realize

that the Panamanian people should be treated as Panamanian people because we are all the same and we are human.

[Reporter] What work are they doing?

[Diaz de Endara] So far, I have not seen that they have done any work. I have not seen it.

[Reporter] The Arnulfists want to [word indistinct]?

[Diaz de Endara] Of course, the Arnulfists.... [changes thought] They [PDC leaders] are their bosses and every time the Arnulfists attempt to do something, the PDC leaders put them down and tell them they are inept.

[Reporter] Are you going to attend the 1 April meeting?

[Diaz de Endara] What?

[Reporter] Are you going to attend next Monday's meeting?

[Diaz de Endara] Just as the president said, I have not been invited, but I would be delighted to attend. [end recording]

Herrera on Questioning by Attorney General

PA3003015191 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Today, former Colonel Eduardo Herrera was taken from prison in Naos to the Attorney General's Office for questioning about the events of 5 December 1990. The community has been surprised and concerned about the long delays in questioning former Col. Herrera about the circumstances surrounding his escape from the Naos penitentiary in December 1990. Now that former Col. Herrera has been officially questioned, a ruling on the case can be issued.

Escorted by Public Force members, Col. Herrera arrived at the attorney general's office at 0745 this morning. He was questioned by the authorities concerning the charges against him. These are: prison escape, violation of internal state security, and sedition. After more than 10 hours of questioning, Herrera made the following comments:

[Begin recording] [Herrera] After being in prison for five months—in my opinion unjustly—I have finally been brought to the Attorney General's Office for questioning. I have wanted so much to answer these questions. I wanted to render my statements in a decent manner and not while being surrounded by U.S. troops. The first time I was surrounded by U.S. troops and I refused to be questioned.

I believe the attorney general is satisfied with my statements and that many matters were cleared up. I also believe that history is proving that I was right. I will now answer your questions.

[Unidentified reporter] Some time ago, you said that the rug will probably be pulled out from under the president of the Republic. Now, Ana Mae [President Endara's wife] has made similar statements. What can you say about this?

[Herrera] I believe that despite the fact that she has been criticized, the first lady has spoken the truth.

[Unidentified reporter] In what sense?

[Herrera] In every sense.

[Unidentified reporter] The Christian Democratic Party (PDC) is attempting to....

[Herrera, interrupting] This is what she said and I believe I also gave a report to the president about certain actions that were being carried out against him. All of you know, however, how he reacted to my report. I believe that he must now take into account what his wife has told him.

[Unidentified reporter] What is your current situation?

[Herrera] I am still under arrest in Naos. I am waiting for the attorney general, who will soon be going to the United States to attend a human rights conference. He will have to defend his statements about the human rights situation in Panama. I trust that justice will be served.

[Unidentified reporter] [Words indistinct] do you believe there is democracy in Panama?

[Herrera] I fought for a true democracy and as you can see I am under arrest. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Party Leaders Discuss National Issues, Future

PA0104010291

[Editorial report] Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish at 1600 GMT on 31 March begins to carry recorded the 95-minute "Let Us Find Solutions" panel discussion program, which addresses the subject "Panama: Where are we headed?"

The panelists on this occasion are Hector Penalba, secretary general of the Arnulfista Party (PA); Roberto Eisenmann, director of the daily newspaper LA PRENSA; Ivan Romero, secretary general of the Christian Democratic Party (PDC); Father Javier Villanueva, of the Cristo Rey Catholic Church; Alberto Conte, coordinator of the National Civic Crusade (CCN); and Luis Guillermo Cascio Arias, secretary general of the Nationalist Liberal Republican Movement (Molirena). Circuito RPC Television News Director Julio Miller is the moderator.

The program begins with a three-minute "report" that summarizes the current social, political, and economic situation, stressing that the Panamanian people feel "disappointed and frustrated," yet the government "does nothing," and the parties in the government

coalition "mutually accuse each other of plotting coups, while the socio-economic problems threaten to drown us all." Pointing out that the "general confusion in government circles appears to be the beginning of the end," the report adds that there is "no coherence" among the branches of government that have failed to meet the people's demands. After 15 months of government, the judicial branch has not yet resolved any of the important cases, the executive branch is "weakened by useless disputes among the political parties," while the Legislative Assembly "speaks much, but does little," the report adds.

The first panelist is Penalba, who says that the PA is "patriotic" and feels that "all stable and dynamic government alliances are the result of a political willingness to promote well-being and call for all parties involved to act in a just manner, something that is not happening now." Penalba adds that "our party has not been treated well," particularly by the PDC and "certain officials" who are trying to "monopolize public posts and leave the worst part for our masses, who contributed massively to the elections."

PDC Secretary General Romero responds that the PA is "wrong" and that the PDC is the "target of unjust attacks." He then notes that the PDC received over 40 percent of the votes cast on 7 May 1989, and therefore the PDC holds important positions "to serve the country."

Alberto Conte says that the "CCN thought its struggle for liberation was over on 20 December 1989, when the tyrant fell," and it then left the "professional politicians in charge of directing the country." Conte points out, however, that "promises have not been kept" and the people's demands have not been met "simply because party politics are at stake." Therefore, the CCN is now "demanding" the reconstruction of the country.

Molirena Secretary General Casco Arias says that his party "seeks harmony," and feels that "the democratic institutionalization of the country is the current main objective." He stresses that "everyone's cooperation is required to solve national problems," as it is very difficult "to pass drastically from an organized opposition to an operating government."

When Miller asks Father Villanueva if he is "satisfied" with the situation, the priest of Cristo Rey Church described by Miller as the "bastion in the struggle against the military dictatorship" answers that he "is worried." Father Villanueva points out that although the church was not a member of the CCN, its goals are the same as those of the church and therefore "we struggled together to attain the victory of human values." The priest defends the role of the PDC, as its members "are working hard and being successful," and this accounts for their "arrogant attitude." He then urges all politicians to set aside their own interests and seek the unity of all groups.

LA PRENSA Director Eisenmann admonishes that "we must change the formula," yet he does not explain how this can be done, although he admits "there are very able and qualified people running the government."

The panelists then engage in debate over party politics, the economic stalemate of the country, the appointments to government positions, the "lack of organization" among government officials, the lengthy bureaucratic procedures, and the many problems that affect the people, including unemployment.

Father Villanueva then suggests "a meeting of the various leaders of the political parties with the CCN and even a representative of the church who has experience and knowledge...so that it will be impartial and enlighten the participants to reach...a patriotic agreement that will benefit all."

Miller then gives each panelist the opportunity to express his views. Eisenmann agrees with Father Villanueva's recommendation that "the three government leaders meet with party leaders...until a solution is found." He stresses that "each will have to give in a little," adding that, as politicians, they must realize that the national clamor is for their reaching an agreement, and if they cannot reach an agreement, "they should formalize their disagreement, so that the president can have a council of ministers that will respond to what he has in mind for the country."

Conte agrees with Eisenmann on the need for an agreement within the government's coalition to overcome the current stalemate.

Penalba admitts that the country has reached a stalemate and blames the PDC for the situation. He says that "the PA is willing to seek the truth and the light that leads to fraternity," adding that "fraternity will bring peace and understanding among brothers" who fought together as brothers against the tyranny, but today "are being overcome by their ambitions and selfishness."

When Miller asks Romero to comment on Penalba's accusations against the PDC, Romero says that differences within the government alliance should be discussed among the parties, recalling that before the elections, there were frequent meetings, which have not continued. He notes that the PDC "has stressed the need to strengthen the alliance through agreements on basic points," adding that the Civic Crusade has echoed this call, which is positive.

As the program comes to an end, Miller asks Conte if the Civic Crusade would be willing to resume its role, encouraging dialogue and agreement among political leaders. Conte says that the Civic Crusade has always promoted dialogue, stressing that although political differences are normal, the country's priorities should come first. Therefore, he says, the Civic Crusade will remain vigilant, demanding solutions for the people's problems. He urges government leaders to meet and agree on a national plan to reconstruct the republic.

Miller then asks Conte if the Civic Crusade could obtain commitments from the three secretaries general participating in the panel discussion, to which Conte replies: "I would like them to officially accept this invitation to begin talks, starting at this very moment."

Romero, Penalba, and Casco Arias cheerfully accept the invitation. Father Villanueva then asks them to decide on a date, and place for the meetings. They agree to meet on Monday, 1 April, without specifying the place.

In closing, Miller concludes that "while high government officials act as if they are on the verge of the 1994 elections, problems are worsening and the nation suffers the effects of unproductive partisan struggles." He urges "implementation of unilateral actions intended to achieve the sole objective of rescuing Panama from the abyss into which it has fallen." He adds that this requires "a dialogue with the participation of the ruling parties and other sectors of our national life," dialogue which "should take place as soon as possible, before it is too late."

Media Reaction to Telephone Tapping of Endara

PA2903222391

[Editorial report] Panama City media, on 27 March, carry editorials and commentaries in reaction to reports of telephone tapping at the Panamanian presidency.

Panama City Radio KW Continente in Spanish at 1223 GMT on 27 March carries a three-minute station commentary "Espionage and Democracy," asserting that the Panamanians are determined to defend democracy against dictatorship, and against those seeking to undermine the democratic system. Citizens cannot understand, however, why democracy is being upheld by methods similar to those used by the former dictatorship. The commentary adds: "Listening to the incredible reports of electronic espionage in the government is a throwback to old practices, which were so harmful and outrageous that we all thought they had been already eradicated." It concludes that President Endara should have already destroyed all the institutions and equipment that had been used by Noriega to subjugate the people.

Panama City EL DIARIO INDEPENDIENTE in Spanish on 27 March on pages 1 and 22 carries a 400-word article stating that presidential spokesmen have reported on government activities designed to "detect more electronic espionage on President Endara's closest collaborators." The article adds that people close to top government leaders were talking about the possibility of an imminent cabinet crisis, and possible resignations of Christian Democratic Party (PDC) ministers—in light of allegations that they were plotting against Endara. It concludes that "an intelligence source told this newspaper not to rule out the possibility that top PDC members are behind the tapping of President Endara's telephone lines."

Panama City CRITICA LIBRE in Spanish on 27 March on page 4 carries a 450-word editorial "Political Espionage" claiming that Endara's decision to show reporters his tapped telephone was an unprecedented episode in the country's history. The editorial states that "what is happening in the country is painful particularly because we do not deserve it after 21 years of military rule." It adds that "the president's conduct on 26 March has only served to accentuate the differences in the ruling coalition."

Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish on 27 March carries an unattributed 200-word front-page article in the "As of Today" column questioning the tapping in light of the fact that members of the current government opposed such practices during the 21 years of the military dictatorship. The article states that president Endara has confirmed that his telephone was being tapped, but also acknowledged that he did not know who was responsible. The columnist concludes with a question: How much longer are we going to have a president who cannot preside and a government that cannot govern?

Argentina

Polls Show Dissatisfaction With Menem's Policies

PY3103200091 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2256 GMT 30 Mar 91

[Text] Buenos Aires, 30 Mar (EFE)—Two out of three people surveyed in a poll taken in the first quarter of 1991 in Buenos Aires and the surrounding area have expressed their opposition to the government of President Carlos Menem of the Justicialist Party (Peronist).

The Miguel Angel Nudelman Bass polling company released the results of the 15 polls taken from January to March 1991, which indicate that 73 percent of the people surveyed reject the government's economic policies. Only 17 percent expressed support for the Menem administration and the rest refused to give an opinion.

Regarding the upcoming elections on 8 September, the poll shows that 66 percent would not vote for candidates from the Justicialist Party.

Former President Raul Alfonsin of the Radical Civic Union received 26 percent of the preference in the "politician's image" category, which is close to the percentage received by Menem and Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo.

The government's economic plan was rejected by 90 percent of the pensioners polled, 88 percent of the public workers, and 85 percent of the teachers.

The politician with the best image is Cordoba Governor Eduardo Angeloz of the Radical Civic Union, who received a rating of 40 percent, followed by Mendoza Governor Jose Bordon of the Justicialist Party with 38 percent and Vice President Eduardo Duhalde with 32 percent.

Dissident Railway Workers Union Resumes Strike

PY2903184691 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1312 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Buenos Aires, 29 Mar (NA)—Juan Vitali, leader of the dissident railway workers unions, said today that workers will continue their strike on the Roca and San Martin lines because Argentine Railways Enterprise prevented "dismissed workers from returning to work."

As a consequence, "the 44 branches that lifted the strike yesterday today said that the strike will continue" for an indefinite period.

Labor Under Secretary Enrique Rodriguez, said this morning that "in principle, striking workers showed haste in resuming their strike."

Rodriguez said he was "optimistic" that the 45-day-old conflict will be solved. He reiterated that the government intends to rehire all dismissed workers. [passage omitted]

Strike Lifted Again

PY3003032691 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 2155 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] Buenos Aires, 29 Mar (TELAM)—According to union leader Juan Vitale, the Railway Coordinating Commission decided this afternoon to lift, as of 2000 [2300 GMT], the indefinite strike it had called early this morning, after having lifted a previous strike on 28 March.

Vitale stated that the workers who had been fired are going to submit an administrative appeal in which they will request an abrogation of the firings, and after a legal period of time (the enterprise) will resolve the situation of each worker.

Rail Services Resumed

PY3003160091 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1504 GMT 30 Mar 91

[Text] Buenos Aires, 30 Mar (TELAM)—The Economy Ministry has authorized the normalization of services on the railway lines that had been closed earlier by the executive branch, the press office of the Argentine Railway Enterprise [EFA] reported.

In an official communique, EFA states that in the face of the unconditional lifting of the strike by the striking railway workers who have requested that their dismissals be reconsidered, the Economy Ministry has authorized the normalization of services on the railway lines that had been closed earlier by the executive branch.

The communique concludes by noting that the normalization of these services goes into effect today. Commuters are thus reminded that all railway lines are currently operating, although the Roca Line units are operating every 40 minutes.

Iranian News Office in Buenos Aires Attacked

PY3003182691 Buenos Aires LA PRENSA in Spanish 26 Mar 91 Second Section p 3

[All Iranian names as published]

[Text] Two armed individuals attacked the branch office of the Iranian news agency IRNA at 1800 on 25 March. The assailants waited for Director Ali Rabon Pour whom they threatened to kill unless he gave them his documents.

Rabon Pour told EFE that the assailants had entered the offices through a first-floor window at approximately 1400 and tied up translator Mohamed Aghaghanian and waited for the director whom they threatened with their weapons.

"One of them had his face covered but the other wore no disguise and both seemed to be Argentines," according to Rabon Pour, who said that he has been frightened

since the robbery. "We have closed the office, and we are looking for another place to set up shop," he said.

Ali Rabon's fear kept him from getting in touch earlier with the Argentine Association of Foreign Correspondents to ask for their support.

For two and a half hours the assailants remained at the IRNA office. They tied up Rabon and a friend of his who had stepped in to say hello, and they repeatedly threatened to kill the director of the office. The assailants also broke into the safe and took money, documents, two cameras, three recorders, and a telephone answering machine.

Together with Iranian Ambassador in Argentina Mohamed Pour Mohamendi, the IRNA director went to see Luis Halcon Palus, Argentine Foreign Ministry director general for Middle East affairs.

The Foreign Ministry director general promised to investigate the incident and relayed the report to the State Ceremonial Office although in his opinion the robbery had been perpetrated by common criminals.

Despite the fact that things were stolen, Ali Rabon believes that the attack had political motives because, according to him, common criminals would have not remained in the IRNA office as long as they did.

On the very afternoon of the incident, personnel of the Fifth Police Precinct station arrived at the IRNA office to inspect the place and promised to return to take fingerprints, "but they never came back," Rabon said.

Neither did the police post the guards that they had promised despite the IRNA representative's diplomatic status in Argentina. IRNA opened its offices in Buenos Aires three and a half years ago, and it had previously had no trouble.

Stronger Labor Cooperation With Chile Sought

PY3003173291 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1510 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Buenos Aires, 28 Mar (TELAM)—Following a series of meetings in Chile, Argentine Labor Minister Rodolfo Diaz and his Chilean counterpart Rene Cortazar, agreed on the need to maintain a continuing relations because this is a great opportunity to improve labor relations between the two countries and to strengthen the relations promoted by President Carlos Menem and President Patricio Aylwin.

This statement is included in a joint communique that the two ministers signed during a visit Diaz made to Chile. The two ministers and their respective teams analyzed important issues of labor and social security.

At the conclusion of a seminar the two ministers expressed their firm conviction that the proper operation of the democratic institutions provide the appropriate and irreplaceable conditions for achieving economic development and fair progress for the entire society.

The officials agreed to establish a fluent technical exchange to examine and outline common criteria on issues related to the constant workers' migration between the two countries. They also agreed to promote the mechanisms included in the bilateral labor accord and to establish procedures for expeditiously proposing recommendations to update and strengthen the accord. They agreed on the need to analyze the situation of seasonal workers in both countries.

They also decided to intensify the exchange of experiences to design and implement advanced labor legislations to guarantee appropriate rules for equitable labor relations between workers and employers and for the exchange of experiences on social security matters.

* Polls Predict PJ's Slide in Upcoming Election

91SM0230A Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish 10 Mar 91 p 8

[Text] Two nationwide polls predict a clear-cut decline for the Justicialist Party in next September's elections, a resurgence of provincial parties, and a better showing for the Radical Party (UCR). The polls were conducted by Inforserg Brokers S.A., which in 1987 predicted a Carlos Menem victory in the 1989 elections, and by Miguel Angel Nudelman Bass; the results were made public today.

The Menem administration expects to receive early this week the findings of polls that it commissioned the companies Mora y Araujo, Heriberto Muraro, and Julio Aurelio to conduct.

The Inforserg Brokers poll gathered responses from 722 persons throughout the nation; the pollsters' goal is to question 45,000 people by 31 August about how they intend to vote in the upcoming elections for governors, national and provincial legislators, and national authorities.

The data collected by the firm as of 1 March point to a victory for the Justicialist Party in Formosa, La Pampa, La Rioja, Mendoza, San Luis, Santa Cruz, and Santiago del Estero. But they also predict a loss of the governorships that the party currently holds in Entre Rios, Santa Fe, Tucuman, Salta, and Tierra del Fuego.

A projection of the poll data indicates that the Radical Party is assured of victory in the Federal Capital, Cordoba, Entre Rios, and Santa Fe; it would thus add two Peronist provinces to the ones in which it currently governs, although it may lose Rio Negro, where the outcome is regarded as uncertain according to the poll.

The same survey indicates that provincial parties are assured of victory in Corrientes (Autonomist-Liberal Party), Neuquen (Neuquen Popular Movement), San Juan (Bloquista Party), Tucuman (Republican Force), Tierra del Fuego (Fuego Popular Movement), and Salta (Salta Renewal Movement).

According to this prediction, two military officers who served as governors appointed by de facto governments, Domingo Bussi in Tucuman and Roberto Ulloa in Salta, will again be in charge of their provinces' destiny, albeit this time by popular vote.

Lastly, the outcome of the elections in Buenos Aires, Catamarca (hit by the Maria Soledad Morales murder scandal and the Saadi clan crisis), Chaco, Chubut, Rio Negro, and Misiones is considered uncertain for the time being.

According to Nudelman Bass' first nationwide predictions for the September elections, the Radical Party is clearly ahead in the Federal Capital, Santa Fe, and Cordoba, while in the province of Buenos Aires the party is strongest in the interior, which elects 80 percent of the officials. It notes that electoral districts two, four, five, six, seven, and eight reflect the Radical Civic Union's edge.

According to this poll, election districts one (northern Greater Buenos Aires) and three (southern Greater Buenos Aires) would vote against the administration by 45 to 18. The UCR gets 40 percent of the opposition vote (18 percent of the total); another 40 percent expressed no preference, and somewhat less than 20 percent are leaning towards other parties. The remaining 37 percent have not made up their minds.

According to the Nudelman poll, if we include all of the country's districts, the Radical Party gets 49 national deputies, the Justicialist Party 40 (half for the Menem faction), the provincial parties 14, the left five, the Democratic Center Union three, and other groups three. Sixteen seats remain undecided.

The same poll notes that 18 million voters will choose 11,700 officials this coming 8 September and that so far the Radicals lead in 6,100 races, the Justicialists in 3,300, and other political groups in 1,600, with 700 posts still undecided. It gives the UCR 27 percent of the total vote, the Peronists 22 percent, and other parties 12 percent, with 39 percent undecided.

* De Estrada's Independent Candidacy Assessed

91SM0230C Buenos Aires LA PRENSA in Spanish 7 Mar 91 p 7

["Observer" Column: "A Local Fujimori"]

[Text] In the 1989 elections he ran in the federal capital on the UCR [Radical Civic Union] ticket of Angeloz-Casella. In 1991, in contrast, he will be running for governor of Buenos Aires Province against the candidate of Alem's party, presumably Juan Carlos Pugliese.

This 180-degree turn in election campaign strategy is no surprise to observers, however, because Dr. Santiago de Estrada is an independent who is being wooed by various governments. He served as an official in the last military government and until a few months ago was in charge of pensioners in the Menem administration.

His views also match those of some UCR men. Like Juan Carlos Pugliese, he thinks that if Eduardo Duhalde is not the Peronist candidate and if the "lemas" law is ultimately rejected, the election in the country's main electoral district will be between him and the Radical Party.

On what does he base such great optimism? On the polls, among other factors. Surveys by Mora y Araujo and Lynch, Menendez y Nivel show that he has a high popularity rating and strong support among likely voters. To this must be added the very sharp decline in the popularity of the major parties, which could enable the future governor to be elected with not much more than two million votes.

The 5 August plebiscite highlighted the nosedive in the percentage of the so-called captive vote.

The prospects of independents like De Estrada improved in the wake of this development, as he will ask those who voted no to vote yes (for him, obviously).

Among the factors that he thinks will help him are:

a) A reputation for honesty. In this regard he admits that Pugliese is also acknowledged as a politician with a clean record.

b) His status as an independent without ties to any political institution. He feels that the parties have given rise to a "party-ocracy," and no one is quite sure who makes the decisions in these institutions. It is on these Fujimori-like traits that he bases most of his hopes.

c) Support among pensioners and Catholics.

De Estrada senses that the people strongly reject the parties, but he also knows that he will need a political structure to compete in September. Therefore, he is quickening the pace of his contacts with provincial and neighborhood forces, although he is keeping these efforts strictly confidential until the alliances have been consolidated. He also knows that during the campaign he will have to withstand attacks from his foes and more than a few accusations. The Radicals will, for example, remind him of his understanding with pensioners leader Estrella Monteverde, an active supporter of his efforts who collected a hefty salary from the National Institute of Social Security (more than 20 million australes) while retirees were—and are—receiving paltry allowances.

* Voter Preferences, Views on Province Takeover

91SM0230B Buenos Aires LA PRENSA in Spanish 3 Mar 91 p 8

[Text] An opinion poll conducted by the consulting firm Lynch, Menendez y Nivel among 1,000 persons in the capital and Greater Buenos Aires in the first half of

February reveals that almost two-thirds of the voters are still undecided for the election that will be taking place in six months.

Meanwhile, another poll, conducted in February by the Studies Center for the New Majority in the province of Catamarca among 500 persons, reveals that a high percentage of the public is in favor of a federal government takeover of the province.

Elections

According to the Lynch, Menendez y Nivel poll, only 13 percent of the persons surveyed in the capital and 15.1 percent in Greater Buenos Aires say they will vote for the Radical Civic Union (UCR).

In the capital 9 percent say they will vote for the Justicialist Party, and in Greater Buenos Aires 17.8 percent.

The Center Alliance gets 6 percent in the capital and 4.3 percent in Greater Buenos Aires. United Left gets 1.3 percent in the capital and 3.8 percent in Greater Buenos Aires, while Socialist Unity receives 1 percent in the capital and 1.8 percent in Greater Buenos Aires. The undecided account for 69.5 percent in the capital and 57 percent in Greater Buenos Aires.

In July of last year, before the plebiscite in Buenos Aires Province, only 48.1 percent were undecided about their vote. By October the percentage had risen sharply to 70.7. In November it dropped to 65 percent, edging up to 66.3 in December and then dropping slightly over the past two months (63.3 percent).

In spite of the declining popularity of the president and the administration over the past two months (from December to February), the UCR moved up only from 12.8 to 14 percent in its average support in the capital and Greater Buenos Aires, Peronism from 11.2 to 13.4 percent, and the UCD [Democratic Center Union] from 3.7 to 5.1 percent, while United Left fell from 3.2 to 2.5 percent, and the remaining parties declined from 2.8 to 1.4 percent without any major changes.

Lynch, Menendez y Nivel concludes from its poll that "the captive party vote is still down to one-third of the electorate. The remaining two-thirds will make up their minds on the basis of the candidates, the platforms, and the circumstances."

Moreover, Peronism's voter-support floor, which has historically been around 30 percent, today stands at 13.4 percent, while the UCR's, which has been 20 percent, is now down to 14.

In spite of the declining popularity of the administration over the past two months, there are no major changes to be noted in voter trends; the undecided vote has not shrunk much, and voter preferences for a party other than the ruling one have not increased.

Catamarca

The poll conducted by the Studies Center of the Union for the New Majority in the province of Catamarca about a federal government takeover shows that 70.5 percent of the respondents are in favor of one, while 29.5 percent are opposed.

As for the popularity of various figures, Miguel Marcolli (Justicialist dissident) has a positive image among 63.4 percent of the respondents and a negative one among 13.4 percent, an almost five to one margin.

Ramon Saadi (Justicialist governor) has a markedly negative image, inasmuch as 72.8 percent of the respondents view him thus, while 14.4 percent see him in a positive light. The negative to positive ratio is five to one.

Assistant police commissioner Luis Abelardo Patti has the best image, as 78.1 percent of the respondents view him positively, while only 0.6 percent see him in a negative light, 125 favorable opinions to one unfavorable.

The presiding judge has a 71.9-percent positive rating and a 2.2 percent- negative rating; Sister Marta Pelloni has an 83.1-percent positive rating and a 3.4-percent negative one; Elias Morales, the father of the young woman who was murdered, has a positive rating of 78.8 percent and a negative one of 3.4 percent; and Dr. Lila Safe, the Morales family's attorney, has a positive rating of 45 percent and a negative rating of 17.2 percent.

Should the National Government Take Over Catamarca?

Reply	Percent
Yes	70.5
No	29.5
Total	100.0

Voter Intentions

Party	Capital (percent)	Greater Buenos Aires (percent)
UCR	13.0	15.1
Justicialist	9.0	17.8
Center Alliance	6.0	4.3
United Left	1.3	3.8
Social st Unity	1.0	1.8
Workers Party	0.0	0.3

Voter Intentions (Continued)

Party	Capital (percent)	Greater Buenos Aires (percent)
Republican Force	0.3	0.0
MID[1]	0.0	0.0
Do not know	69.5	57.0
Total	100.0	100.0

1 [Integration and Development Movement]

Source: Lynch, Menendez y Nivel

Image of Major Figures in Catamarca Province

Name	Positive	Fair	Negative	Unsure	Positive/Negative	Total
Miguel Marcolli	63.4	18.4	13.4	4.7	4.7	100.0
Ramon Saadi	14.4	9.4	72.8	3.4	0.2	100.0
Arnoldo Castillo	64.7	23.4	4.4	7.5	14.8	100.0
Simon Hernandez	44.1	32.2	7.2	16.6	6.1	100.0
Luis Patti	78.1	16.3	0.6	5.0	125.0	100.0
Presiding judge	71.9	17.8	2.2	8.1	32.9	100.0
Sister Marta Pelloni	83.1	8.8	3.4	4.7	24.2	100.0
Elias Morales	78.8	12.5	3.4	5.3	22.9	100.0
Dr. Lila Safe	45.0	32.5	17.2	5.3	2.6	100.0

Source: Studies Center of the Union for the New Majority

Trend in Voter Intentions for 1991 Elections (percent)

Party	July	October	November	December	February
UCR	16.8	14.2	11.9	12.8	14.0
Justicialist	14.3	6.6	14.7	11.2	13.4
UCD	14.3	4.1	4.8	3.7	5.1
United Left	3.8	3.1	2.6	3.2	2.5
Others	3.1	1.3	1.1	2.8	1.4
Unsure/No answer	48.1	70.7	65.0	66.3	63.3

Source: Lynch, Menendez y Nivel

Bolivia

Ministers Explain Mission of U.S. Advisers

PY2903132891 La Paz Radio Fides Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Congress will meet in special session on 2 April at the request of President Jaime Paz Zamora to grant the required permission for U.S. troops to enter the country. The U.S. troops will help the government implement a plan to militarize the fight against drug trafficking.

According to Minister of the Presidency Gustavo Fernandez, 56 U.S. military advisers, two Army light infantry battalions, and a civic action battalion will participate in the program. Bolivian and U.S. troops will work on training exercises for 10 weeks.

[Begin Fernandez recording] The fight on drug trafficking is the responsibility of the Special Anti-Narcotics Force. By order of their commanders, the Bolivian Armed Forces will give logistic and operational support. Their participation will include logistic support, reconnaissance, special operations, and civic action. The Bolivian Armed Forces will not operate against coca-producing peasants. Neither will they arrest people or seize property. According to the law, this task is the exclusive responsibility of the special police force.

U.S. cooperation to train and equip special units is not related to the Armed Forces' participation in fighting drug trafficking but to the Armed Forces' extended role in this struggle. [sentence as heard] U.S. cooperation is designed to support the Army in training and equipping two light infantry battalions so that they can perform the logistic and operational support missions assigned to them in item seven of this communique.

Two 10-week training periods are contemplated. The first four weeks will be dedicated to the basic training of local instructors. The second four weeks will be used to train troops, and the last two weeks for field exercises. The United States will support the training program with 56 specialized advisers for each [word indistinct]. Their role will be strictly advisory. [end recording]

The U.S. Government will provide nine B-9 Caterpillar tractors, eight bulldozers, eight trailer trucks, 29 tow trucks, four compressors, and a complete set of communications equipment. The program will use 76 2.5-ton trucks and 24 jeeps. The Armed Forces will receive two [word indistinct] planes—which have reportedly already arrived—four helicopters, and patrol boats.

Information Minister Mario Rueda Pena said that U.S. instructors will train the Armed Forces, particularly the Army, to fight drug trafficking. [passage omitted].

Gregorio Lanza, member of the Chamber of Deputies narcotics commission, said that police will be placed under the orders of the Army because the commander of the Special Anti-Narcotics Force will be a high-ranking Army officer and because the number of military troops will double the number of UMOPAR [Rural Area Police Patrol Unit] members. [passage omitted]

Deputy Supports Military Role in Anti-Drug Effort

PY2903135091 La Paz Television Boliviana Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] The announcement that the Armed Forces will participate in the struggle against drug trafficking has caused different reactions in the political field.

Deputy Wilson Lora, chairman of the committee for the struggle against drug trafficking, explained the functions of his organization.

[Begin Lora recording] The Armed Forces have been participating in the struggle against drug trafficking. It is not a militarization of the struggle; it is an enlargement of the Armed Forces' participation. Obviously the Armed Forces are not going to participate immediately. What we are doing is to wait for the U.S. advisers to arrive to train Bolivian Army troops to participate in support of the special forces for struggle against drug trafficking. This will not be done immediately because you know that training troops takes time and that will probably take at least six months or more.

We believe that the special forces for the struggle against drug trafficking are fulfilling their mission. But Bolivian territory, the eastern part of the country, is large. The drug traffickers are settling in the Beni and Pando regions where we do not have enough special forces personnel. Therefore, we have to get the cooperation of the Armed Forces for logistical support for the struggle against drug trafficking. [end recording]

Army Units To Be Ready To Join Fight in Jul

PY3003134491 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1750 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] La Paz, 29 Mar (EFE)—The Bolivian Government today confirmed that the first Army units that will struggle against drug trafficking will be ready in July, after receiving training from U.S. military advisers for two and a half months.

The Bolivian Government decided last week to order the participation of the Army in the struggle against the production and trafficking of drugs, a task that has thus far been performed by a 1,000-man police unit with Navy and Air Force logistic support.

The decision was strongly criticized by political, union, and religious sectors, out of fear that drug traffickers may try to corrupt the commanders of the Army and that military troops may unleash violence among coca-growing peasants. Bolivia is the world's second largest coca producer, after Peru.

General Jorge Moreira, Bolivian Armed Forces commander in chief, has told the local press that the inaugural training course for the first units that will fight drug traffickers will begin in the last week of April, and the second training course will begin in August or September.

During each 10-week period, the Bolivian troops will be trained by 56 U.S. advisers, who are expected to arrive in Bolivia in the next few days.

Defense Minister Hector Ormachea said that once the first units are ready in July, the decision to have them join the fight will depend on Bolivian President Jaime Paz Zamora.

Ormachea reiterated that the Army will operate only in the jungle of northern Bolivia, in the departments of Beni and Pando, where many cocaine laboratories are believed to exist.

In the past few days, government officials have reiterated that the new anti-drug military units will not enter the area of coca farms, which are concentrated in the central region in Chapare.

The order to train the Army to struggle against the production of drugs will permit Bolivia to receive $14 million in U.S. military aid that the White House had frozen, conditioning it to a Bolivian Government decision.

The Bolivian Labor Federation (COB), the only Bolivian labor central, announced yesterday that it will begin a campaign urging the youth not to report to the draft centers, protesting the so-called "militarization" of the struggle against drug trafficking.

During a meeting that marked the beginning of an international meeting of coca producers, COB organization secretary Julio Arce said: "We will begin a campaign

to prevent our children from reporting to the barracks, because if they do, they will kill their parents."

In a letter addressed to Paz Zamora, five peasant federations of Chapare, in Cochabamba Department, expressed fears that "militarization can bring violence to the coca-producing regions."

The letter said : "The acceptance of U.S. military aid will bring more instability to the 50,000 families of the Cochabamba tropical region and to the entire region, and will violate our sovereignty."

Army Officer Denies Alleged 'Militarization'

PY3003204091 La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish 23 Mar 91 Second Section p 1

[Excerpt] Santa Cruz, 22 Mar—General Emilio Lanza, commander of the 8th Army Division, explained today that the word militarization is being used improperly in Bolivia and noted that the anti-drug struggle is not, in fact, being militarized.

"There is no such militarization. The word is being misused. Militarization means applying military rules and the military criminal code to everyone. This will not happen," he said.

On the other hand, he agreed with the decision to use selected Army units for interdiction operations against drug traffickers. "There is no need to mobilize the entire Army," he said. [passage omitted]

Information Minister on Military's Anti-Drug Role

PY3003210091 La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish 23 Mar 91 p 7

[Text] On 22 March the Bolivian Government tried to explain the expression "militarization of the anti-drug struggle" by stating that the participation of Army units in interdiction operations "does not mean that the Armed Forces will be used on a massive scale."

Information Minister Mario Rueda Pena said that "this is a police operation" and stressed that "militarization did take place in Colombia and Peru."

During the last few days the term militarization has been interpreted in many different ways, while various government officials have separately announced that troops will be deployed to Beni and Santa Cruz Departments but not to Chapare.

It has also been reported in Cochabamba that some 1,000 Army troops will participate in suppression operations in the Chapare. Journalists told the information minister that the "government should make an effort to release more serious and responsible reports to prevent confusion like this, which was created by executive branch officials."

Mario Rueda Pena replied: "There is no confusion; everything is absolutely clear. The anti-drug struggle will not be militarized but policed [policializada]."

In view of persistent requests for further clarification, Rueda explained: "When we say that there will be no militarization, we mean that the Armed Forces will not be used on a massive scale for repressive tasks, as has been the case in other countries."

He also explained: "We want military personnel to be trained by foreign advisers in drug enforcement methods so they can be used in suppression operations whenever police forces are overwhelmed or unable to carry out their duties."

He also reported that "the anti-drug struggle will not be under the control of the Armed Forces but of the organization which is in charge of this specific task."

Rueda reiterated that actions will not be aimed at peasants but against the gangs of drug traffickers.

He urged the people criticizing the government to take a straightforward stand: "Are they for drug trafficking or against it?"

Brazil

Rezek Justifies Position on Persian Gulf

PY0104014091 Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 30 Mar 91 p 3

[By correspondent Teodomiro Braga]

[Text] London—Brazilian Foreign Minister Francisco Rezek said yesterday that time has shown that the Brazilian Government's decision not to send troops to the Persian Gulf war was the correct one. At the beginning of his 10-day tour of Europe, Rezek stated that his appraisal is based on the fact that no country involved in the military operations against Iraq has been compensated with contracts for the reconstruction of Kuwait.

We lost nothing in either the financial or political fields for having made the decision we thought correct, Rezek stated. Nobody gained anything for making a decision that was just a little different from the one we made. If anyone believed that a more active position would have been practical and profitable, even though not very commendable, they can now see that Brazil is not lagging behind for not having exaggerated, Rezek said, noting that he was referring to the distribution of contracts for Kuwait's reconstruction.

According to Rezek, the United States has already acknowledged that Brazil made the right decision.

He said: Despite the rather discouraging statements made by some lobbies in Washington to the detriment of our country's image, the U.S. Government is now more convinced that the Brazilian Government could not have done otherwise. President Bush, Secretary of State

James Baker, Undersecretary of State Burger [name as published], and the people whom we spoke with never had a doubt in this regard.

He added: Some peripheral sectors of the U.S. Administration expressed their doubts. We could not say anything different from what we had already stated concerning the legality of the military action to restore Kuwait's sovereignty. We would have been unable to justify, however—in the eyes of Brazilian society—the presence of Brazilian youths in the Persian Gulf.

The most important aspect of Brazil's official position on the Persian Gulf conflict is the fact that it reflected what Brazilian society wanted, Rezek said.

He added: A foreign policy can succeed if, instead of being based on artificial positions, it is consistent with certain principles that we believe reflect the collective opinion of Brazilians. There is nothing so erroneous and dull as imagining that foreign relations is an issue that floats in the air, beyond the people's representation, and imagining that the government has to meet the people's health, transport, and price control needs but that it has nothing to do with the people on matters related to foreign relations. This is not right: It is also necessary to take into account the people's feeling.

Departs for Europe

PY2903231491 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 29 Mar 91 p 1

[Text] Foreign Minister Fernando Rezek will travel to Europe today to contact governments and nongovernmental human rights organizations. Rezek will try to neutralize the image created by reports on the extermination of children in Brazil. Congress will launch an investigation committee next week to look into the murder of children.

Outgoing Minister Lifts Fuel Sale Restrictions

PY2903141091 Brasilia Radio Nacional da Amazonia Network in Portuguese 1000 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Service stations can now open on Sundays and holidays and can operate without any schedule restrictions the other days of the week. Infrastructure Minister Ozires Silva has signed a resolution nullifying fuel-rationing measures. This was Minister Silva's last official act before turning his post over to Eduardo Teixeira. The installation is scheduled to take place at 1600 at Planalto Palace.

Next week the new infrastructure minister will nullify the other fuel-rationing measures: Bottles of cooking gas will again contain 13 kg, and distribution quotas for fuel alcohol, gasoline, and diesel oil to service stations will cease.

* UNICAMP Study Describes Industrial Lag

91SM0224A Sao Paulo VEJA in Portuguese 27 Feb 91 pp 60-63

[Text] The citizens of Brazil, dealing with a subject they share with the minister of state, have debated the efficiency of Brazilian industry in more or less the same way as they gamble—on the basis of intuition. It is a known fact that our industry is inferior, and that it is cheating the consumers with poorly finished products. In the midst of this lagging situation, there are some prominent exceptions, and this too is generally known. This "hunch" technique has always been used as the sole tool for criticism because the parties involved lacked a more professional diagnosis with regard to the rot eating at Brazilian industry from within. Now such a diagnosis exists, and the figures are frightening. From them one learns that Brazilian industry has not lost just one decade in the race to modernize its machinery and to improve its products. On an average, it is lagging behind the illustrious economies in the northern part of our planet by between 15 and 20 years. It is as if we were still sitting at our first-grade desks while our brighter colleagues are already doing postgraduate work at the university.

The study runs to 4,000 pages, divided into almost 50 sections. It was produced over a period of 10 months by a team of 86 experts at a cost of more than $1 million. No survey with so broad a scope or such detail has ever been carried out in this country before. The bills are being paid by the Sao Paulo Secretariat of Science and Technology, headed by the economist Luiz Gonzaga Belluzzo, one of the authors of the Cruzado Plan, who will release the package this week. "I believe that we needed a diagnosis showing the distance which separates us from the more developed countries," Belluzzo says. "We are studying everything from the industrial sectors to the new educational and management standards required to sustain a modern economy."

Obviously, the report is not light weekend reading. Detailed, peppered with charts and quotations, sometimes excessively academic and even in some places misdirected, it seeks to imitate "Made in America," a study published in 1989 by professors at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology—the famous MIT—for the purpose of analyzing the reasons for American industry's loss of competitive capacity, as compared to Japan's brilliance. The production coordinator of the Brazilian report was the economist Luciano Coutinho, of the University of Campinas (UNICAMP). "The effort is worthwhile," Coutinho said last Thursday, with the finished volumes stacked on his desk. In a country with the economic problems Brazil is facing, and at a time when there is distress about the future, nervous palpitations, and little confidence, the volumes produced at the UNICAMP make a contribution to putting the discussion on a more rational basis.

Brazilian industry today is regarded inside and beyond the country's frontiers as a usually sluggish machine. It is putting a new video-cassette model on the market at a

time when the "Asian tigers" are launching three. It takes Brazilian automotive plants 48 hours to produce a car, while it takes the Japanese only 17 hours. A number of figures of this type have already become familiar to the circles particularly interested in the issue of national competitive capacity. Now the UNICAMP report provides an additional frightening fact. In its most explosive chapters, this document suggests that the country has lost so much ground in some sectors that it is no longer worthwhile to press the matter.

The Brazilians have lost out in the game of genetic engineering, for example. When the Americans want to improve the yield of the beans they plant, they immediately change the genetic code of the seeds. In Brazil, in order to obtain a cornstalk resistant to drought, the individual involved makes hundreds of seed-crossing experiments until he chances on the right combination. Also, Brazilian industry is incapable of inventing medicines. It is not that they are not manufactured in Brazil. They are, but the formulas come direct from foreign research centers. When Brazilians become involved in the pharmaceutical sector, it is to copy processes known abroad 20, 30, or 50 years ago—as is the case with the production of insulin. "It becomes absolutely clear that Brazil is in the initial stage of productive and technological advance in the biopharmaceutical sector, and it is reproducing developments achieved about four decades ago in the developed countries," the report says.

The Customs Sector

The encyclopedia created at the UNICAMP is valid where its scientific content is concerned, but one perceives a very acute and overwhelming fault therein when it lists the negative faults of Brazilian industry. Here the study captures a little of the depression which the citizens of Brazil have been feeling after a problematic decade, aggravated by the year 1990, when the Collor government turned the economy upside down in an effort to rebalance it.

Looking at the profile of Brazilian industry a little more closely, one sees that it is superb in some respects, beginning with the number of fields in which it is active. Brazil is probably the only country of its size in the world which produces everything—from airplanes to silk ties, and including silverware and computers, and all of it of reasonable quality. Except for some imported novelties which are beginning to appear, the Brazilian citizen will have a hard time purchasing foreign goods in the shops, drugstores, or supermarkets. An American citizen wears a shirt made in Taiwan, buys a Japanese car, drinks French wine, eats Italian spaghetti, and sees nothing marvelous in this customs "hash." Brazil has succeeded in establishing an industrial park of admirable breadth, but it is lagging in its methods of producing things. Today, our domestic products are more costly than and inferior in quality to their counterparts produced in the best furnaces on the planet.

An Embarrassment

One of the advantages of the UNICAMP study is that it identifies the industrial sectors which have deteriorated and suggests ways of rebuilding them. The metallurgical sector is a good example of what is happening in Brazilian industry, which is sizable, but like the patients in a hospital corridor, drags its feet as it moves. With 175,000 employees, exports running to about $3.5 billion, and an annual invoice total which is three times that, it cannot but be a source of pride to the people of Brazil, as it has been in past decades, when giant factories were sprouting everywhere. But it has become so sluggish and uneven that people are behaving as they do with the elderly great aunt whom it is deemed better to send to her room while the holiday guests are visiting.

According to the study, only eight of the 35 Brazilian metallurgical enterprises in this sector have laboratories, and only one, USIMINAS [Minas Gerais Iron and Steel Mills, Inc.], located in Minas Gerais, is investing in research on the same level as international industries. The metallurgical enterprises have succeeded in improving their skill in turning out plates, and they have even improved their products, but they do not develop anything. In this respect they are nowhere. And herein lies a problem, because outside Brazil, particularly in Japan and in Germany, the countries which are most advanced metallurgically, the plants move ahead like high-jump athletes. First of all, according to the report, these countries have reduced their production, while at the same time manufacturing more refined and expensive products. Brazil remains where it has been. It appears to be more inclined to produce a sheet of steel than anything a little more complicated. Only 8 percent of Brazil's metallurgical production is made up of special, more fully processed steels, as compared to 15 percent in the developed countries.

The technicians under the supervision of Luciano Coutinho worked for 10 months to complete the biopsy of Brazilian industry, analyzing 12 key industrial sectors. And in this study they separated the wheat from the chaff. In the uneven mass of our domestic industry there are admirable instances of good health. Take for example the situation of the paper and cellulose manufacturers, who operate in a sector in which the international competition is the very worst and the investments are huge. The businessmen on this team are doing extremely well. For two decades, the average growth of production for paper and cellulose in Brazil has been 9 percent per year—more than the average growth in the economy of any developed country. In terms of speed, the paper producers can compete with any foreign counterpart. Unlike their domestic partners operating in other sectors, those on the "paper team" are capable of product development. Its members have succeeded, for example, in producing cellulose of good quality from eucalyptus, using an efficient technology which bears the Brazilian stamp.

A Venerable Antique

In the decade of the 80's, the majority of the Brazilian industrialists remained in the starting lane and stopped investing. And one of the dramatic results of this softening is that Brazilian industry entered the 1990s with practically the same production capacity as it had 10 years ago. But this is only true of the rank and file. For the aluminum manufacturers, things were different. Between 1980 and 1989, they tripled their production, built modern factories, began to compete intensively on the foreign market, and succeeded in providing the country with almost all of the aluminum it consumed. The sector snowballed rapidly, but according to the figures in the study, it could become bogged down in Brazil's monotonous problems. Aluminum is a strategic metal, and is now one of those most eagerly sought in the world, second only to steel. And it is likely to move to first place in the near future. The leading countries in this sector subsidize the aluminum producers, allowing generous discounts on the rates charged for electricity, the largest cost component. Brazil, with its hydroelectric monuments, has managed to charge a rate seven times that in Canada, four times that in Venezuela, and twice that in Norway.

In a careful reading of the UNICAMP report, one can derive at least some consolation from these examples of efficiency provided by the aluminum, and paper and cellulose industries. Unfortunately, in tonnage, the industries run the gamut from 10 down to a disastrous example at zero. In Brazil, for example, the textile industry has one of the most secure markets, among other things because everyone needs clothing. But its development, with the exception of some enterprises devoted to modernization and quality, ranges from tolerable to the very worst. "About 80 percent of the national textile equipment is more than 10 years old," the study indicates. And worse still, the majority of the businessmen in the sector do not have the slightest understanding of the techniques for managing stocks and other routine aspects of the profession.

Another sector of which the study is quite critical is automotive assembly. One does not even need the report of the Sao Paulo Secretariat of Science and Technology to know that there is a tumor in this area, but the document sets forth some curious conclusions. In connection with productivity, the report says that Brazilian industry could be considered the worst in the world. With regard to vehicle quality, Brazil also ranks at the very bottom. It is one of the most backward countries in the world in this respect. "The Brazilian data reveal that there are 92.5 (factory) defects per 100 vehicles produced. Japan is the country with the highest quality level in the world, with 60 defects per 100 vehicles," the study says. Furthermore, because of the cost of domestic supplies and other problems, Brazilian industry charges excessive prices for what it produces, thus rendering itself incapable of competing on the international market. A venerable antique—the Opel—can be seen in the streets of Brazil, to the astonishment of an American woman researcher who contributed to the study. "In an extreme case, the Opel has been in production for 20 years," she says. On an average, the Brazilian models have a life cycle of 15 years, four times the world norm.

A Turgid Style

Like any work produced by a number of people employed at the universities, the study on Brazilian industry has its share of academic peculiarities. The statistical data in some of the reports, for example, are only partially clear. In this respect they imitate the very problems suffered by Brazilian industry. One notes that some of the reports were drafted by professors who are more familiar with libraries and theories than with production lines. And some of them were written in the turgid language used by the bureaucrats in the federal treasury who draft the income tax manuals. In this connection, one of the researchers created the following stylistic invention: "Establishment and articulated use of policy tools adapted to the effort, by the complex of agents, of the systemic functions covered by the prevailing strategy, that is adaptation of agents and resources." The researcher himself must have found his style very complicated, because he went on to clarify, in parentheses, that he was explaining the success of EMBRAER [Brazilian Aeronautics Company], thanks to the combination of tax incentives and market reserves.

Another criticism which could be made has to do with the insistence of the analysts that the state spend money and spread subsidies and incentives around to correct the industrial problems. This solution is in no way original. And in addition, it suffers from a high degree of improbability, given the current status of the public accounts. The government does not even have the money to maintain its footing, much less to push industry upward. It is known that Brazilian industry needs investment, and very quickly, in order not to sink into a Bolivian lag. The question is where to find that money. One of the ways would be to use domestic savings, but this formula is problematical. Those who are saving are few, and they are poor. And confidence has been lost since the Collor Plan I confiscation. There is the potential in selling state enterprises, but this is advancing slowly, and perhaps will never proceed beyond the plans on paper. Another way would be to seek money abroad. This is still more difficult, for the reasons at the forefront of Brazil's reputation. Brazil is not reliable, it does not pay the foreign debts it owes, it freezes prices, confiscates investments, and arrests businessmen who mark up the price of avocados. Last week, a document drafted by the foreign chambers of commerce described Brazil as a very risky field for the foreign investor. It listed 10 or so dangers, including the bureaucracy, the foreign debt, poor income distribution, and the tax level. The diagnosis of Brazilian industry is an excellent point of departure for an effort to assess the enormity of the task Brazilian businessmen will have to undertake if they want one day to be a part of the First World. How to address the challenge continues to be an open question.

A Slippery Position

Despite all of the backwardness noted in Brazilian industry, some sectors may yet speed up and achieve a reasonable comparison with the best world economies. This is the case with the aluminum, and paper and cellulose industries. But what fate awaits the industries in the computer and biotechnology fields? Forced by the inevitable internationalization to enter into Formula 1 competition, they are equipped only with skates, instead of racing wheels. A microcomputer put on the market at the beginning of the decade continued to be state-of-the-art for three years after leaving the store shelf. Today new, more powerful, and cheaper models are coming from the plants in the industrialized countries every six months. A new variety of corn developed in the laboratory could formerly remain profitable for 12 years. The current seeds, five times more productive, will remain so for only six years.

Informatics, which has a turnover total of about $7 billion every year in Brazil, and has grown throughout the decade at twice the rate seen in the economy as a whole, functions well under the wing of the state. That is its source of energy and its great weakness. The state acts as a protector in two ways. In addition to the market reserve, which keeps foreign enterprises at a distance in the most profitable branch, microcomputers, Brazilian factories enjoy purchasing quotas established by the enterprises and the government bodies. When the informatics industry returns to the real world in 1992, the year in which the market reserve will officially come to an end, it will not have any way of facing the challenges of an open economy. It will have to shrink, like cheap clothing after the first washing. Some of the Sao Paulo Secretariat of Science and Technology reports point to the rocky path toward survival—reliance on the most unique characteristic of Brazilian industry, which is its personalized service to the customer. An example can be seen in automated banking, which has created top-of-the-line products. Association with foreign enterprises could minimize the impact of competition, but the report warns that this is being pursued without some of the prerequisites for making it successful. According to this judgment, vigorous centers of research would have to be created at universities and government institutions in order for association with foreign companies to result in a real absorption of technology by the Brazilians.

The situation of the enterprises prepared to continue in the battle for the microcomputer market is discouraging. Agile and demanding, this market has made broad use of products imported legally or illegally. Six out of every 10 microcomputers in use in the country are imports. The nation's lag in genetic engineering dates back two decades, and the opening up of the economy will make victims of the few domestic pharmaceutical and agricultural products being manufactured by outdated techniques. Lacking a better recommendation, the study points toward a twisted way out—pirating formulas with no respect for patent rights.

Chile

Military Response to Rettig Report Viewed

PY2903161891

[Editorial Report] Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish at 1700 GMT on 28 March, during its regular newscast, carries some 12 minutes of reaction by several political parties other civilian sectors to the military evaluations of the Rettig Report by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

In a 90-second report, National Renewal Party Chairman Andres Allamand opines that "Chilean democracy is strong enough to face the different reactions to and points of view on the Rettig Report." He affirms as positive the fact that the Army and Navy reactions to the Rettig Report were communicated at the National Security Council, and he notes that the reactions "do not endanger national reconciliation."

Another 90-second item reports the Independent Democratic Union (UDI) support for the Army and Navy reactions to the Rettig Report and the UDI's belief that the report does not present a profound, complete, and well-balanced truth. UDI Chairman Julio Dittborn comments that the 27 March reactions "substantially change the facts previously known by the Chilean citizens," and he notes the UDI's new opinion that "the human rights violations were nothing but excesses in repressing terrorism."

A two-minute item reports the Radical Party's concern over the tone and content of the Army evaluation of the Rettig Report and over the institution's disposition to continue behaving in a similar manner in the near future. In recorded comments, Radical Party Senator Carlos Gonzalez Marquez regrets "Pinochet's arrogant and proud tone similar to the one he used to justify human rights violations over the last 17 years." Senator Gonzalez Marquez points to the murder of innocent peasants during what can be called "a dirty war" fought by the Army against the Chilean brethren, and he calls for the Senate to debate the Rettig Report to "complete the analysis of the document."

The Executive Board of the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) expresses its discouragement at the Army and the Navy reactions to the Rettig Report and says that the reactions do not contribute to true reconciliation among Chileans. In recorded comments PDC Acting Chairman Gutenberg Martinez emphasizes President Aylwin's efforts to "achieve national reconciliation and the work of the Rettig Commission that proved that there have been disappearances, torture, and executions; people have been submitted to political violence in Chile." Finally, the PDC calls on Chileans to share the responsibility for the violations despite the clearly differing opinions.

The station also reports that the Party for Democracy (PPD) commented that "the Army declaration on the

Rettig Report is mean and proud and shows no understanding of the reality being experienced in Chile." In a recorded remarks, PPD Chairman Erich Schnacke points out that the declaration "tries to hide the serious human rights violations committed during Pinochet's regime," and that the conclusions of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission are unassailable. PPD Secretary General Sergio Bitar says that the strength of democracy cannot be restricted by acts such as those expressed in the Army declaration.

In further political reaction, the station reports that Socialist Party (PS) Chairman Jorge Arrate said that the Army and Navy declarations show the institutions' lack of sensitivity in the face of the human rights violations committed in the country and that the Army is incapable of sharing the pain experienced by many Chileans, adding that "this does not mean that the country should be paralyzed by the recollection of past events." Chamber of Deputies Chairman Viera-Gallo says that Chileans "must learn to coexist with the different historical interpretations" and "that the absolute independence of Congress must be reasserted."

Turning to labor reaction to the Army and Navy evaluations of the Rettig Report, the station airs an 105-second item noting that Manuel Bustos, leader of the United Labor Federation (CUT), has urged "all Chilean workers to be in a state of alert in view of the Army and Navy responses to the Rettig Report." Furthermore, Bustos expresses his "frustration over the Army and Navy reactions to the report, which showed that they are still living in the past." Bustos declares: "Only when those responsible for human rights violations are taken to court will Chile be able to forgive them."

As for reaction from the buisness sector, the station reports that Fernando Arguero, chairman of the Industrial Development Association (SOFOFA), has said that it is not up to the businessmen to comment on Army declarations "although everyone has the right to express his or her opinion." Arguero refutes the idea that "the Army declarations might affect the country's stability."

Finally, it is reported that Hernal Flores, chairman of the National Association of Government Employees (ANEF), has expressed "profound disappointment" over the Army and Navy responses to the Rettig Report. Flores declares that the labor unions expected "a response similar to that of Carabineros and the Air Force." In view of the obvious violations, including "the Rettig Report mention that government agents took part in the murder of former ANEF Chairman Tucapel Jimenez," Flores regrets the Army's "arrogant" attitude.

Soviet Deputy Minister, Business Group Arrive

PY3103033091 Santiago Television Nacional de Chile Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 31 Mar 91

[Text] A delegation of USSR businessmen led by Vladimir Burmistrov, deputy minister of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations, arrived today. The Soviet businessmen will participate in the first meeting of Soviet and Chilean businessmen.

[Begin recording by Karen Khatchaturov, chairman of the Soviet Committee for Solidarity With Latin American Countries, identified by caption] This group is made up of approximately 30 people who represent the various sectors of the USSR economy, the pluralism of which is the result of the market economy rules in effect today. [end recording]

From 1 to 5 April the Soviet businessmen will participate in the first Soviet-Chilean business meeting. According to Vladimir Burmistrov, deputy minister of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations, the objective is to look for areas of common interest to establish smoother and more direct cooperation among businessmen of the two countries. Specifically, we want to examine import, export, and investment possibilities, he said.

The Soviet deputy minister explained that the idea is to restart commercial accords and specific agreements with Chile.

Mining Cooperation Agreement Signed With Peru

PY3003151691 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1724 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Text] Santiago, 28 Mar (EFE)—Fernando Sanchez Albavera, Peruvian mining and energy minister, and Chilean Mining Minister Juan Hamilton today signed a cooperation agreement aimed at developing initiatives to allow the deepening of the economic, scientific, and technical relations in the field of mining.

The agreement establishes that both governments will more deeply analyze the current situation of the Intergovernmental Council of Copper Exporting Countries (Cipec) in order to improve its structure and function so that they conform to the new political and economic realities of the member countries.

Cipec, which includes Zambia and Zaire in addition to Chile and Peru, will hold a ministerial-level meeting in Santiago in July 1991.

Chilean-Peruvian cooperation in the field of mining also includes the exchange of information on matters related to the production and trade of copper. Such information can be useful to the two countries' mining sectors.

The two ministers will also exchange data on development plans being implemented by the small mining companies in Chile, particularly with regard to customs duties.

The agreement includes the possibilities being opened in Peru for oil exploitation and exploration which result from the new policy calling for increased foreign investment. In view of that, Chile will send a delegation of ENAP [National Petroleum Enterprise] experts to Peru.

Central Bank Reports $280 Million Trade Surplus

PY3003171891 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 26 Mar 91 p B3

[Summary] Central Bank President Andres Bianchi reported yesterday that the country had a $280 million trade surplus during the first two months of 1991.

Bomb Damages National Renewal Party Office

PY3003141291 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 23 Mar 91 p A24

["Late Report"]

[Text] A bomb blast occurred at the Lo Prado office of the National Renewal Party [RN]. The bomb, which caused no injuries, did some 2 million pesos in damage.

The information was released by Luz Cea Ossandon, chairperson of the RN youth group in Lo Prado, who noted that the blast occurred at 2310 [no date given].

The youth leader said that personnel of the Carabineros Special Forces inspected the place and estimated the damage at some 2 million pesos.

Colombia

EPL Delegate to Constituent Assembly Interviewed

PA3003202091 Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 1243 GMT 30 Mar 91

[Telephone interview with Jaime Fajardo, EPL (Hope, Peace, and Liberty) delegate to the Constituent Assembly, by Orlando Guerrero in Medellin; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Guerrero] We have gotten in touch with Fajardo in Medellin regarding remarks made a few hours ago by the prosecutor general. Dr. Fajardo, what sort of difficulties are the EPL movement members experiencing in being pardoned?

[Fajardo] Good morning. It was agreed with the government that pardon for the detained companeros would become effective on 1 March, but this problem has not yet been settled. So we went to the prosecutor general this week and told him about the pardon. We are waiting for the respective courts to release our detained companeros.

[Guerrero] How many EPL members are in prison?

[Fajardo] Approximately 200. Some 1,800 ex-combatants were issued a permit, which does not allow them to stay in cities.

[Guerrero] How long did the administration of President Cesar Gaviria say it would take to pardon all of the EPL members?

[Fajardo] As I said, we understood the pardon would be effective 1 March, when we laid down our arms. This is when the pardon would become automatic. Nothing has been happening, however. The situation is critical and worrisome. The accords are not being enforced.

[Guerrero] What do you think is the cause of the problems related to the issuance of safeconducts and pardon certificates?

[Fajardo] On the one hand, there is much bureaucracy in the Constituent Assembly. There are considerable delays in carrying out actions in government offices. On the other hand, the Pasto advisory office failed to expedite the proper procedures so that the accords could be complied with as soon as the arms were laid down.

[Guerrero] Do you know whether this experience of the EPL is also that of the Revolutionary Workers Party [PRT] and the Quintin Lame Movement, which are also in a demobilization process?

[Fajardo] It is worrisome that certain precedents have been established. We all recall that something similar happened with the M-19 [19 April Movement]. It was impossible to pardon some ex-M-19 combatants because of the delays. Something similar also happened with the ex-combatants of the PRT and the Quintin Lame Movement. I think the basic problem is that there is a need for greater political determination and greater control in the enforcement of the accords.

[Guerrero] Apart from the problems related to the issuance of pardons and the release of EPL members who are being held in prison, what other difficulties is your movement encountering? Or are pardons the main problem?

[Fajardo] There are other problems, particularly regarding the reincorporation and education of the group's members: all that deals with what has been described as a return of the combatants to the society. Some companeros have been detained in certain areas, precisely because they do not have a pardon. Security is also a problem. Three of our former combatants have been murdered.

[Guerrero] So these problems can be solved. To prevent these difficulties from recurring, are you planning to meet with government representatives in the next few days?

[Fajardo] We have reported the situation to the government minister and met with the prosecutor general recently. [Words indistinct] ...the so-called Sabato commission, in charge of both looking into the areas where the EPL operated and investigating violent actions and those responsible for the dirty war unleashed when the arms were laid down. [passage indistinct due to interference] This peace accord, depending on how it is handled, will help other Guerrilla Coordinating Board member organizations reach similar accords with the government. But if it is not handled properly, it will not stimulate new peace accords in Colombia.

[Guerrero] Can your words be interpreted to mean that, if the accords are not complied with, disarmed EPL members would go back to the mountains and resume guerrilla activities?

[Fajardo] As you know, a guerrilla who has been fighting for 23 years and who fails to receive the benefits promised to him with an accord could very well return to his former activities. We have made this clear to the government. We do not want this. Such a decision will not depend only on our goodwill, but also on compliance with the reincorporation plans and the accords we reached with the government.

[Guerrero] What do you think about some EPL members led by Caraballo who did not lay down their arms and are participating in armed activities together with the ELN [National Liberation Army] and FARC [Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia] of the Simon Bolivar Guerrilla Coordinating Board [CNG]?

[Fajardo] We have heard about this. I am not as concerned about the activities of Carballo and his group—their actions will not greatly change the national panorama—as about the fact that they are working with the CNG. This is the shadow that protects Carballo. I think, however, that the government must understand that there are proposals presented to us that will reach the CNG. It is necessary to be even more flexibile so that the dialogue with our companeros can crystallize. Regardless of the number of radical stands, I think these proposals will reach all organizations apart from the role that the leadership of each plays.

Constituent Assembly Examines Military Service

PA3003001991 Bogota EL NUEVO SIGLO in Spanish 22 Mar 91 p 11

[Text] Mandatory military service is not only an issue of interest for high school graduates, but also for all those who believe that the Armed Forces should be restructured.

The philosophical principle of what the Armed Forces stand for, has not yet been openly discussed.

There are two opinions on the subject: one asserting that the Armed Forces should continue to abide by the current practices, and the other stating that military service should be mandatory.

A clearer separation of functions, and particularly the creation of a special force tasked with enforcing public order, is also being examined. The Armed Forces, under such an arrangement, would be tasked with the protection of the country's borders.

Along those lines, members of the Constituent Assembly have discussed the meaning of national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and constitutionality.

For High School Graduates

The government believes that military service should be mandatory, with no exceptions or conditions. Graduates must continue to walk along country roads with their Guajira backpacks.

The government's draft bill states that "the current article 165 of the Constitution on mandatory military service is to remain unchanged. This provision uphold the basic obligation of all Colombians to defend the country and its institutions."

For the benefit of those who like to see olive green uniforms only in war movies, Antonio Galan has submitted a draft bill with yet another alternative.

Galan's draft bill states that: "The performance of community service, aiming to provide better living conditions, will become an alternative to mandatory military service."

According to Galan, the community service would focus on areas inadequately addressed by the government, such as education.

Critics of the draft have pointed out that this idea had failed in the past due to a lack of planning and finances. Others believe that the plan could harm the Armed Forces by reducing the current high level of recruitment.

An alternate proposal, now being studied by a sub commission, allows a person to refuse mandatory service for religious reasons. This has been suggested by Miguel Santamaria Davila.

Military Immunity

There is a divergence of opinions concerning the issue of military immunity, particularly in light of charges of human rights violations, mismanagement of the budget, and failure to enforce public order.

Antonio Galan proposes to "create an army trained to defend the rights of the civilian population against the violent attacks by armed groups or groups acting outside the law."

This would mean raising to constitutional level something that already exists in practice with the anti-guerrilla commandos and other specialized groups.

Meanwhile, Alfredo Vasquez believes that "the right of the Armed Forces and the Police to be questioned and investigated solely by their superior officers and military judges—as established in article 170 of the Constitution—has obstructed investigations of human rights violations by military and the police."

He therefore argues that military judges should not be allowed to try civilians.

These aforementioned proposals have been discussed in a general manner. The terms under which the military command will act, in accordance with constitutional

provisions calling for the abolition of all military ministers, is yet to be determined.

Brazilian Border Operations Draw Attention

PA2903184891 Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 26 Mar 91 p 6A

[Report by Luis Alberto Guiza P.]

[Excerpts] The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia [FARC] attacked a Brazilian military detachment on 26 February. The Brazilian Army, in turn, began an offensive to control public order on the border.

This operation has included the violation of Colombian airspace and the torture of Colombian miners, according to reports filed by Enrique Castro Rincon, a coucilman for Vaupes, in the Taraira area, District Attorney Fabio Ramirez Alonso has said.

According to the prosecutor, since the end of February, Brazilian helicopter gunships and fighter planes have flown over Colombian airspace, skimming over Taraira Corregimiento.

Not only are there air incursions, but the Brazilian Army has caused navigation on the Taraira River, on the Brazilian border, to come to a halt. [passage omitted]

Ramirez Alonso spent 15 days in the area investigating reports of the mistreatment of miners and he witnessed the overflights.

Deputy Foreign Relations Minister Rodrigo Pardo told EL TIEMPO on 25 March that "there is no official comment to confirm violations of Colombian airspace and no official report to deny it. Colombia will not protest to the Brazilian Government until official information is gathered to permit such a claim."

The Foreign Relations Ministry has formed a commission with the Attorney General's Office and the Defense Ministry to investigate these events. The commission is now in the Taraira area.

The councilman, however, reported that a group of miners were detained by the Brazilian Army for no reason whatsoever in international waters on the Taraira River, then released them to the Leticia authorities. The miners showed signs of having been tortured. [passage omitted]

The results of the district attorney's investigation were presented in the Mitu commissariat's office, at a meeting attended by military authorities, advisers, the mayor, and other government officials. The law offices representing human rights and the military were also informed.

Continuous reports of incursions began to be reported the day after the attack on the military position.

Witnesses saw the Brazilian Army troops enter the Taraira mines during the day and open fire. According to the district attorney, seven colombian miners were reported missing shortly after the attack, and three others were killed. [passage omitted].

Irregular actions have been perpetrated against Colombian boats for the past several months. In November, two boats owned by a merchant who works at the mines were seized. [passage omitted]

On 20 March, a meeting was held at the Defense Ministry to discuss the region's problems. The meeting was attended by Admiral Juan Gaitan, commander of the Joint Southern Command (CUS), which has its headquarters in Leticia; Vaupes Commissar Alcibiades Calvo Mozo; and Asomiva [Association of El Vaupes Miners] President [Hector Valencia Roman].

It has been announced that two Air Force helicopters have stopped over in Mitu enroute from Bogota to the La Pedrera military base, from where they would to transport a detachment of soldiers to Taraira.

Finally, concerning the 26 February attack in which three Brazilian soldiers were killed and nine others wounded, it has been confirmed that it was the FARC's doing. This has been stated by the president of Asomiva and by a communique issued by the Amazonas commissariat's advisers.

The Asomiva's representative and the commissariat employees have thus dismissed the possibility that miners were involved in the attack.

Meanwhile, Brazilian authorities have announced that approximately 40 armed men fired at a camp where two Colombian gold miners were detained after they were caught working in Brazilian gold mines.

The report issued by the Vaupes commissariat's attorney concludes that the miners are not guerrillas because the only weapons they had were pikes, shovels, and machetes.

Pardo, meanwhile, said that the Foreign Ministry has discussed the problem with its Brazilian counterpart during routine bilateral talks, "and we have been seeking effective solutions similar to those established with Venezuela and Ecuador, such as joint patrols on our border rivers."

Banks 'Afraid of' Buying, Selling Dollars

PA2903184491 Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 1248 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] Among other things, Colombian banks have advocated the purchase and sale of dollars. Nevertheless, now that they have been authorized, bankers are afraid of carrying out these operations due to the money laundering prevalent in Colombia.

Two months after the government established measures for this, only one bank has dared make a single or ? of these operations.

Pipeline Attacks Cause 22-Billion Peso Losses

PA2903185091 Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 1209 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] A total of 64 terrorist attacks have been perpetrated by FARC [Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia] and ELN [National Liberation Army] on the network of oil, gas, and multiproduct pipelines so far this year. The damage inflicted has caused losses for more than 22 billion pesos, according to a report released by the Colombian Petroleum Enterprise. Colombia has failed to produce an average of 4 million barrels of oil so far this year due to the terrorist actions by FARC and ELN.

In addition, Ecopetrol told this station that 64,000 barrels of crude oil were lost as the result of dynamite attacks on the various pipelines of the country. In its official publication, The Oil Newsletter, Ecopetrol said that the first seven weeks of 1991 in Colombia can be rated as a dark period for oil as the result of large-scale attacks on the crude oil industry, resulting in losses of more than 150 billion pesos. Despite this situation, however, production is still 221,000 barrels of oil daily.

Pipeline Operations Resumed

PA2903161391 Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 1236 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] Bogota—Ecopetrol [Colombian Petroleum Enterprise] has reported that the pumping of oil products through the pipeline dynamited on 23 March in the country's eastern area completely resumed this morning.

Technicians managed to reconnect the entire system that had been disrupted near Caques, east of Bogota. The supply of fuel through this pipeline to the capital was resumed uneventfully. Since the pre-dawn hours, Ecopetrol has started to supply natural gas to the poorest sections southeast of Bogota, which were affected by the explosions. Authorities maintain security operations throughout most of the area to ensure the normal supply of oil by-products.

Paraguay

Rodriguez Stresses Economic, Social Progress

PY3003155491 Asuncion NOTICIAS in Spanish 30 Mar 91 p 12

[Text] In his annual state of the nation report to Congress President Andres Rodriguez has stressed that the country's economy improved during 1990 and that international reserves increased from $241 million to $563 million. The report says that the country enjoys freedom, democracy, and respect for the law. The president also says that cases of "abuse of power" have disappeared.

The annual state of the nation report covers the period from April 1990 to March 1991 and includes discussion of political, economic, and social issues as well as the accomplishments in international relations. Rodriguez will summarize this report at a joint session of Congress on 1 April.

The report says that the country's foreign debt was reduced by 19 percent by 31 December 1990 or from $2.096 billion to $1.7 billion. The report says that the reduction is basically due to the cancellation of the debt with Brazil which amounted to $436 million.

The report adds that last year the country postponed payments on the foreign debt, that the accrued delinquent bill amounts to $403.5 million, and that this amount is owed to creditors grouped in the Paris Club with whom we expect to begin negotiations in the next few months.

The report says that our net and freely disposable monetary reserves increased from $241.2 million to $563.5 million by December 1990 and that the increase was the result of postponed payments on the foreign debt, other private investments in the country, and the binational companies' earnings.

Rodriguez says in his report to Congress that one of his government's priorities is to control and reduce inflation because such action is vital for stability and essential for sustained growth.

Another passage of the state of the nation message notes that public liberties and human rights laws are currently being enforced. It says: "There is freedom, democracy, and respect for the rights of citizens. Abuse of power, arbitrary actions, and physical mistreatment in police stations have disappeared, and concord, to which the government and the people aspire, is in the process of being consolidated."

The report warns, however, that there remain some small sectors that are reluctant to submit to the rules of democracy because they are accustomed to authoritarianism and demagogy as well as to using public property any way they want to their own benefit.

The message adds: "Today the citizens freely exercise their political rights, save a few who were leaders of the 'militant' [pro-Stroessner] faction of the Colorado Party and are responsible for the mismanagement of public affairs and complicity with the arbitrary actions of the ousted regime."

The executive branch contends in another passage of its state of the nation message that some conflicts continue over illegal land occupations, and it points out that manipulators bent on disrupting the democratization process are behind such conflicts. In another passage, the message affirms that nobody has been exiled from or persecuted in the country for his political ideas. It says that "the exercise of journalism is free, and the press contributes to democracy's consolidation with its constructive, wholesome, and objective criticism."

As for foreign relations, the message to Congress notes that in the past two years Paraguay's foreign policy has

changed substantially to keep pace with the complexity and interdependence of international relations and the increasing demands that are inherent to a democratic opening.

The message points out that during the period under review, the chiefs of state have acted more vigorously and directly to promote international relations.

Value-Added Tax To Compensate for Lost Revenues

PY3003121491 Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 28 Mar 91 p 5

[Text] Foreign Minister Alexis Frutos Vaesken has pointed out that the government has been considering the possibility of implementing a value-added tax (IVA) to replace the revenues it will cease to collect as a result of the reduction of customs duties contemplated by the Asuncion Treaty.

This confirms the Finance Ministry report stating that the IVA would be the first new tax to be implemented within the framework of the tax reform, which will be implemented gradually and not all at once, as planned previously.

It has been estimated that in 1991 alone, the government will receive 5 billion guaranies less in taxes in view of the reduced customs fees paid by Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay.

"New mechanisms will have to be created to replace the income represented by these fees. We may have to start collecting the IVA but, basically, the Common Market of the South will create a large economic movement that will result in increased tax collection. [no closing quotation mark as received]

The IVA is an indirect tax that is paid by all the links of the production and trade chain, which is then transferred to the final consumer.

Judge Orders ABC COLOR Workers' Release

PY2903135491 Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 28 Mar 91 p 11

[Excerpts] Criminal Judge Felix Silva Monges yesterday ordered the release of driver Egidio Gimenez and photographer Jorge Caceres, both of ABC COLOR. The judge ruled that Caceres disobeyed a military authority and ordered him to pay a fine of 200,000 guaranies.

ABC COLOR attorney Jeronimo Angulo Gaston noted that the fine was paid under protest because otherwise Caceres would not be released. [passage omitted]

Caceres and Gimenez were arrested by the police on 23 March after a young sentry at "Mburuvicha Roga" [Stroessner's former official residence] fired bursts of submachine gun fire at them while they were performing a task for our newspaper. [passage omitted]

Peru

Fujimori To Visit Japan, Attend IDB Meeting

PY3003130891 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1812 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Text] Lima, 29 Mar (EFE)—Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori plans to visit Nagoya, Japan, to attend the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) governors meeting next month, the presidential spokesman today announced.

At the IDB meeting, Fujimori, 52, will explain the serious economic crisis his country is facing, and he will report on his administration's efforts to reinstate Peru in the international financial system, the spokesman added.

According to the source, the Peruvian president, who is of Japanese descent, has requested a special meeting with Japanese Emperor Akihito, Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu, and businessmen in an attempt to obtain economic help, financial support, and assurances that Japanese businessmen will invest in Peru.

Fujimori said yesterday that he had talked with IDB President Enrique Iglesias, an Uruguayan, who said that the IDB is willing to grant Peru the financial support required for its reinstatement in the international financial system.

Peruvian Economy Ministry Carlos Bolano will travel to the United States today. He will then meet Fujimori in Japan to attend the IDB governors meeting.

Bolano will visit Washington and New York to continue talks with financial organizations and the negotiations for the creation of a "Support Group." This will be an attempt to obtain the $800-million bridge loan Peru needs to pay its debt to the IMF, the World Bank, and the IDB that has become due, Fujimori said.

"Peru is facing a profound crisis and, as a result of the previous administration's policy, all possibilities of obtaining fresh money have been closed to us," Fujimori said.

During President Alan Garcia's administration, Peru estranged itself from the international financial system after the IMF, the IDB, and the World Bank declared that they could no longer offer new credits to the country.

According to the World Bank, the Peruvian foreign debt is estimated at $22 billion, some 60 percent of which has become due.

Former Change 90 Politicians Create New Party

PY3003150291 Lima EXPRESO in Spanish 21 Mar 91 p 4

[Text] Yesterday the five Change 90 parliamentarians who were expelled from the party openly disagreed with "the current party leadership" and announced that they

will establish their own political party. Deputy Mario Soto Godoy, speaking on behalf of Senator Irma Bustamante Morales and Deputies Juana Avellaneda, Guillermo Yoshikawa, Gerardo Lopez and himself, criticized the "palace clique that surrounds President Fujimori and has seized the leadership of Change 90."

Soto Godoy, deputy for Puno, made it clear that he had actually resigned from Change 90 on 6 February 1991 after reporting a number of irregularities. He emphasized: "To announce at this point that I have been expelled is quite ridiculous."

Soto Godoy said that Fujimori's attitude toward the founders of Change 90 is totalitarian and regressive, "and so is the imposition from above of a secretary general, Andres Reggiardo, who has usurped the position that should have rightfully gone to Victor Honma." Soto Godoy added.

He announced that the expelled parliamentarians will create a political party "which will be open to all those who truly want to make changes." He explained that the groundwork for the organization, which is called National Principled Coordinating Board [Coordinadora Nacional Principista], is already under way.

He reported that the nation's First Vice President Carlos Garcia Garcia, "a man of great qualities and abilities who has been sorely offended and humiliated by Fujimori and his clique, may join the new organization."

Immunity of Deputy Accused in Shooting Revoked

PY2903144691 Lima RTP Television Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 28 Mar 91

[Excerpts] The overwhelming majority of the Permanent Congressional Committee members voted today to revoke the congressional immunity of Deputy Vladimiro Zegarra Gutierrez in the murder of a policeman in Cusco.

The 13 to 2 vote was cast after a debate lasting more than 90 minutes. The committee meeting, called urgently to deal with this case, was chaired by Enrique Bernales, first vice president of the Senate. Deputies Victor Andres Garcia Belaunde for the Popular Action and Carlos Calderon Carbajal for the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance voted against the measure. [passage omitted]

Enrique Bernales, in charge of the Senate presidency, personally conveyed the Permanent Committee's decision to Deputy Zegarra. Bernales said that the deputy received the news calmly and expressed confidence that the incident will be clarified.

[Begin recording] [Reporter] After the Permanent Committee reached its decision, Senator Bernales personally conveyed the news to Vladimiro Zegarra. He said that the deputy received the information calmly and expressed confidence that the incident will be clarified.

[Bernales] The deputy has received the decision calmly and serenely. He hopes that the matter will be clarified in court and that he will be found innocent.

[Reporter] The deputy will have to make a statement to a public prosecutor. What procedure will be followed?

[Bernales] The procedure is established by law. According to Peruvian law and the Constitution the state prosecutor is in charge of criminal cases. Therefore, once congressional immunity is revoked, it is up to the state prosecutor to decide whether the deputy should be placed under arrest.

[Reporter] Senator, why did the Permanent Committee not hear out Deputy Zegarra, as certain congressmen have suggested?

[Bernales] I have already explained this. The Permanent Committee does not pass judgment. It cannot conduct a detailed investigation of the case because, if it did so, it would be engaging in courtlike procedures, and we parliamentarians must set an example of respect for the Constitution. [end recording] [passage omitted]

* Perspectives on Shining Path's Future Presented

* Internal 'Clash' Noted

91WR0166X Lima CARETAS in Spanish 11 Feb 91 p 33

[Text] Following the arrests and the evidence which has been found, it would seem that Abimael Guzman now finds himself in a different situation. In the first place there are the acts of strategic carelessness which made those arrests and the collection of an abundance of evidence, including video recordings, possible. In the second place there is the fact that in the leadership group there appears to be no military command. Both circumstances are rather unusual. Until now the persistent, anonymous character of the supreme leader made us think of him as an old man, prematurely bald, well on in years, sick, and as assuming many different identities. Nevertheless, with the exception of his beard, he is the same person, viewed from the outside. Within himself, clearly, he is something else. The fact is that he is no less bloodthirsty or addicted to terror and barbarism. Rather, he seems to have lost his personal bearings.

A holiday, a funeral, a political harangue to a small group made up for the most part of intellectuals make it possible to anticipate an estrangement from his beloved "masses," or the basic groups of the movement.

On the other hand he seems to stay continuously in Lima. Who handles the military command? It should be recalled that in 1987 there was a fierce battle between the faction led by Osman Morote and the one led by Guzman. Nevertheless, at the congress of the movement in 1988 Guzman's hard line won out.

Part of the pursuit and subsequent capture of Morote seems to have resulted from the behavior of some of his

companions which mysteriously resembled that of informers, to the benefit of Julio Cesar Mezzich, his successor.

In other respects the rural methodology of terror is also different. There is no longer an effort made to try to survive simply with what the land provides. There are cases of forced recruitment and collections of funds. Furthermore, in addition to criminal type collusion with the narcotics traffickers changes have been made in the control of certain coca leaf growing areas, where the Sendero Luminoso [Shining Path] movement sets the rules of the game for this illegal activity.

The groups of assassins—like the one which operated in Huaura against Puiggros, a mining engineer—have not received their orders from their respective committees but rather from the mountains and jungles of the Huallaga Valley.

Everything points to a clash between two principal leadership groups: the political and terrorist group, with its main strength in the urban areas, which Guzman reportedly still dominates, short of resources and all of them devoted to ensuring their own comfort and survival; and the military terrorist and guerrilla group, operating in and from the provinces and whose principal leadership could be in the hands of Julio Cesar Mezzich.

Or so it is believed, because there seems to be no one else of his standing in sight. Mezzich's "purist" background may be contrasted with certain views that Guzman is now essentially "dead" as a leader. For example, there is his soft attitude toward death (however beloved the person involved may be), his attachment to a more comfortable life, his position which tends to resemble the hated doctrine of "revisionism," or his distancing himself from the "masses."

All of these divisions began with the scheduling of the "second campaign for developing the great leap forward," which was to start in January 1985 and which, when it did not lead to the expected results, produced the conflict. A "rectification campaign" was undertaken, and there was a withdrawal toward the countryside, with a special emphasis on the coca leaf growing areas, such as the Huallaga valley and the Apurimac region.

In view of the steady weakening of the position which originated with Guzman, the most important result of this strategy reportedly led to what at first was expected to result in the expulsion of Mezzich and his group. Instead, the situation is tending toward a sharpening of the contradictions and a loss in the prestige of the historical leader of Sendero Luminoso, except among the very closed group immediately surrounding him.

* Video's Effects Assessed

91WR0166Y Lima EXPRESO in Spanish
17 Feb 91 pp 5-7

[Interview with Gustavo Gorriti Ellenbogen by Carlos Noriega; place and date not given; first paragraph is EXPRESSO introduction]

[Excerpts] Gustavo Gorriti Ellenbogen, author of the book, "Sendero, Historia de la guerra milenaria" [Shining Path—The History of the Millenial War], is the Peruvian reporter and researcher who, with the greatest diligence and perception, has been studying the phenomenon of the Sendero Luminoso movement since it began in 1980. [passage omitted]

[EXPRESO] How does the video recording shown last week affect the leadership of Abimael Guzman? Is this, as President Fujimori has said, a serious blow against Sendero Luminoso and, in particular, against its leader?

[Gorriti] I think that it will not have an effect in any substantial way. If you consider the Sendero Luminoso organization as a whole, I imagine that there will be some cases in which the view expressed of the "thinking of Gonzalo" is not going to be the same as some people might have wished in their minds. However, I believe that, as a whole, the view of Guzman which emerges from that video recording fits within the context of Marxist orthodoxy. That is, his image is that of a leader who is intentionally simple and approachable to his party comrades and who shares with them, both in work as well as in play.

[EXPRESO] However, Guzman always tried to create for himself an image of asceticism and of disciplined, austere behavior. Has the video recording destroyed that image?

[Gorriti] No. What has been seen is an image very similar to the one which he developed when he was still living a semiclandestine life or living openly in society. The process of turning Guzman into a kind of mystery had already begun at that time. He was called Dr. "Puka Inti" (Red Sun), and his followers thought of him as the wisest of the wise. The fact that he was with them at their parties, when they consumed large amounts of alcoholic beverages, did not change anything.

[EXPRESO] In short, then, you think that Guzman's prestige will not be impaired?

[Gorriti] Guzman's prestige is based on interpreting more effectively than other leaders a group of systematized, intellectual tools. That is, based on his analytical ability and selection of the precise step or the specific action to be carried out to achieve the greatest possible effect. His position as the designated interpreter of history and reality through the use of the instrument which orthodox Marxism-Leninism gives him is the power which Guzman has over his supporters. More than the veneration shown to a priest, this prestige is what is displayed to a philosopher king. It relates to

discipline, intensity, concentration, and a capacity for sacrifice. However, it has nothing to do with asceticism, pious behavior, fasting, or self denial.

[EXPRESO] You say that the sight of Guzman dancing at a celebration does not affect his image in any way. However, the fact that he may appear dressed in a Mao-type jacket and dancing to Greek music—is this something which can undermine his image? Particularly when people living in the mountains or in the outlying areas of the cities, among whom the Sendero Luminoso movement recruits its members, may see Guzman as someone strange and foreign to their customs and culture?

[Gorriti] I do not believe that this will have any effect. I do not believe that a Sendero peddler or a Sendero member from the mountains expects to see Guzman dancing a huayno [popular dance]. The view which they have of Guzman is that he is a philosopher king. As such he has the absolute freedom of a despot to do what he wants, dressing as he wishes, and appearing as he likes.

[EXPRESO] And that image as a philosopher king is not cheapened when he appears as a common and ordinary human being?

[Gorriti] No. When they see or observe someone who has that kind of transcendental wisdom which, according to them, makes it possible to understand the objective laws of history and of the universe, but who, on the other hand, is able to behave with great simplicity, this increases his prestige and his impact among his supporters.

[EXPRESO] So in what respect can the public display of the video recording harm Sendero Luminoso?

[Gorriti] I do believe that the telecast of that program is going to have a very important effect in much more concrete discussions within the Sendero movement. That is, in terms of serious errors regarding security and in mismanagement of the rules of clandestine life. Most important of all, in my view, is that Guzman's mobile features are now known to a majority of the Peruvian people. His image is no longer protected by a clandestine life style. It has become the property of everyone. He goes everywhere and is seen everywhere. Now he is going to have very serious problems in mobilizing and communicating with his supporters. Guzman is going to have an image problem resulting from a subtle loss of status. He no longer has the protection of total ignorance of where he is staying and how he looks at present, which only a few leaders of clandestine organizations formerly had.

[EXPRESO] So that is something which will undermine his image in the view of Sendero members?

[Gorriti] I think so. However, you should keep in mind that he has displayed a notable capacity for ensuring that errors which he has committed are paid for by others.

[EXPRESO] And those shortcomings in Sendero security. How will they weaken Guzman?

[Gorriti] He may have problems, and questions will be asked. He has already had them previously and on numerous occasions. Until now he has always been able to make the necessary changes. Furthermore, he has also benefited from the balance of forces needed to overcome those challenges to his authority.

[EXPRESO] Will what has happened begin a process in which heads will roll within the Sendero movement to pay for the errors which have been committed?

[Gorriti] I hope that in the future we will know in detail the discussions which have taken place on this specific aspect of the handling of internal security. I am almost absolutely certain that there are going to be very harsh and bitter discussions and that more than one of them is going to end badly.

[EXPRESO] How do you explain the fact that such a clandestine and closed organization, which has made the security of its leaders and their immunity from attack one of its greatest features, would make video recordings in which those principal leaders appear?

[Gorriti] I imagine that this relates to a desire to create an historical record for the party. Those video recordings were intended for the future museum of the revolution.

[EXPRESO] Do you think that there has been a relaxation of Sendero security because it is adequate, since its highest leaders have lived through almost 11 years practically free of danger?

[Gorriti] That may be true. In any case never at any time since 1979 should Guzman be feeling the hot breath of his pursuers against his back as he should at present, in view not only of the recent captures but the succession of operations which this small group from DIRCOTE [Counterterrorism Division of the Peruvian Investigative Police] has carried out since the raid on the Monterrico house in June 1990. This is progress by the police. Although it would be wrong to overestimate its effect on the war against Sendero Luminoso as a whole, at the same time it would be highly unjust not to recognize the great value which these searches have had.

[EXPRESO] Could there be certain groups within the Sendero Luminoso behind the capture of this video recording movement who are interested in undermining the image of Guzman in order to challenge his leadership?

[Gorriti] I have no basis for confirming or denying that. In principle it is not inconceivable that such a thing could happen. On the other hand if someone did this, then, taking into consideration the power of Guzman, you would have to think that this is a person who is taking extreme risks, since if he loses...

[EXPRESO] He will die.

[Gorriti] I imagine that he would have much greater problems than expulsion from the party. [passage omitted]

[EXPRESO] Has there really been a change in antisubversive strategy, as President Fujimori has said, in the sense that the security forces have stopped going after Sendero bases, in an effort to strike at the top leadership?

[Gorriti] The president has announced an intention, rather than a change in the existing strategy.

[EXPRESO] He has announced it as an intention which is already being implemented and has said that the recent captures of Sendero members is proof of it.

[Gorriti] He has tried to present things in that way, but that is not the case. On the other hand, it is very probable that he is expressing a real intention and, from that point of view I think that it is worthy of praise and support that he is trying to carry out a much more selective strategy, more directed to the collection of intelligence and of useful information, carrying out operations which reflect this improved intelligence. That is not everything which must be done. However, it is an important part of what should be done.

If Guzman Falls, Sendero Luminoso Is Lost

[EXPRESO] With the broadcast of the video recording, Sendero members may no longer consider the leadership of their organization as something which is impenetrable and invulnerable and that their supreme leader can even be...

[Gorriti] Subject to the hazards of life and death. Yes, and I think that this police activity near him should be making the members think of the importance which Guzman has in the organization. I cannot conceive of Sendero Luminoso continuing with the present pace of growth without Guzman. He is the central aspect of Sendero strength.

[EXPRESO] If Guzman should disappear, would Sendero Luminoso fall apart?

[Gorriti] Perhaps it could continue to exist for a few years as an organization capable of carrying on a wave of endemic violence inside the country, controlling certain areas, and engaging in some operations. However, I believe that it would not grow and that, to a large extent, the reverse would be true. It seems to me that there would be a real possibility, after Guzman is captured—and if the government continues with the proper strategy and with intelligent, sensible, bold, and intensive operations—that there would be a good possibility of defeating the Sendero Luminoso movement.

[EXPRESO] Are there any reasons for sharing the optimism of President Fujimori that we are close to capturing Guzman?

[Gorriti] If there is anything to be learned from a study of almost 11 years of this struggle, it is to be very cautious and prudent regarding victory statements. However, on the other hand, it would not be honest to avoid thinking that this time we have been very close to Guzman.

Guyana

Electoral Observer Team Leaves After 5-Day Visit

FL3003175091 Bridgetown CANA in English 1530 GMT 30 Mar 91

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, March 30, CANA—A three-member electoral observer team left Guyana Friday after hearing opposition and other interest groups' concerns about preparations here for a poll due by year end.

Barbados Chief Electoral Officer Dennis Smith, and Jimmy Carter Centre Logistics Co-ordinators Dennis King and Jennifer McKoy spent five days in preparation for an observer mission by the U.S.-based Carter Centre.

The team, to be followed by another from the centre next week, visited outlying areas here and also met the main opposition People's Progressive Party (PPP) as well as the Guyana Human Rights Association [GHRA].

Opposition leader Dr. Cheddi Jagan raised the composition and powers of the elections commission as the main problems in the run-up to elections. "All the information they wanted was supplied to them and no doubt, they will take all this into consideration and make some investigations of their own," he told CANA.

The GHRA executive, raising mainly human rights and electoral reform issues with the team, said the current voter registration is being rejected because of public distrust of the elections commission. It said thorough re-structuring of the commission is needed to make a credible and efficient registration process possible.

"In the absence of very fundamental reforms of the electoral administration process, the people will not confidently co-operate with elections," the association said.

The Guyana Government has invited the Carter Centre of Emory University and the Commonwealth Secretariat to monitor the elections, after persistent opposition complaints of irregularities.

Opposition leader Jagan expressed pleasure at the team's visit and particularly the presence of Barbadian electoral official Smith on the team. "We are happy that they came here and we hope that not only will they be here at the time of the elections, but that they will set up an office here with a small staff so that they can look at the registration exercise from time to time," he said.

On Smith participating, Jagan said: "I am glad that he is because the prime minister of Barbados had said (at the regional economic conference) in Trinidad that he is certain that (Guyana's President Desmond Hoyte) proposes to have a free and fair election. It is good that someone from Barbados is here to see all the problems confronted first of all with the compilation of a clean voters' list. From the way it is going, it will not be a clean list," he said.

The follow-up group, led by Belize Prime Minister George Price, is expected here next week to look at the on-going voter registration.

Suriname

OAS To Send Observer Mission to Elections

FL2903144091 Bridgetown CANA in English 1344 GMT 29 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Washington, D.C., March 29, CANA—Secretary general of the Organization of American States (OAS), Joao Clemente Baena Soares has announced that the OAS will send a 30-member observer mission, as well as support staff, to Suriname's May 25 elections. Soares was reporting to the OAS Permanent Council on the Organisation's pre-election monitoring in El Salvador, Paraguay, and Suriname.

On Suriname, Soares told the council that "there is in that country a climate that is favourable to the holding of elections and to the presence of the OAS as an observer." Soares said he had signed two agreements linked to the observation of the elections in Suriname and that communications and data processing equipment was already being sent to the country for the process.

The OAS secretary general underscored the contribution being made by the Caribbean Community (Caricom) to the observer mission.

Suriname's permanent representative to the OAS, Ambassador Willem Udenhout, expressed his country's "gratitude" and commended the "exemplary way" in which the secretary general had "conveyed the ideas of the OAS to the government and people of Suriname."

Udenhout told the council of the "urgency" the government and people of his country felt "for a peaceful and speedy return to democratic rule."

"We also feel that the presence of the secretary general and his observer mission will contribute to the achievement of that objective," Udenhout said. He reassured the council that the elections "will be peaceful and fair, and in keeping with the principles of the OAS charter." [passage omitted]